







William E. Barton

THE PARABLES OF SAFED THE SAGE

BY
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TO KETURAH

PREFACE

All true teaching is by parables. The relativity of knowledge compels us to learn, if we learn at all, by comparison and contrast. We have no words for things of the intellect and soul that are not first words of physical things or states. Hence we must always be taught what the kingdom of heaven is like unto.

The brief chapters which make up this book have appeared in successive issues of *THE ADVANCE* during recent months. They are a literary recreation, and something more; for they have a serious purpose. They were begun with little thought that they would be continued more than a few weeks, but as readers of *THE ADVANCE* appeared to like them, and other papers copied them, they have continued to appear. The first one was written while the writer, accompanied by his wife, was making a tour of the Mississippi River in the spring of 1915. The manner in which the mate of the boat addressed the colored deckhands afforded some food for thought. The parable does not reproduce the mate's language precisely, but the meaning and intent are preserved.

The successive parables of the Hollyhocks have met with more of apparent favor than any of the others, and many inquiries have been made whether the experience out of which they grew was real or imaginary. It was a real experience, and occurred essentially as described. The first parable about the Hollyhock was written with no thought that there would

be another, but as other incidents occurred in the days and months that followed, these afforded other themes. Incidentally they brought the author requests for Hollyhock seed, which, fortunately he was able to supply in the first season, for the Hollyhocks that were already rooted bore somewhat abundantly, spite of their various adventures. The author acknowledges also the kindness of those who have supplied him with Hollyhock seed of various kinds. He planted it all in the summer of 1916, and is hoping that the plants will blossom next summer.

The Hollyhock incidents grew out of the fact that the church of which the author is pastor sold the old parsonage, which for fifteen happy years had been his home, and that in the interval before the occupation of the new parsonage, he has been living in a new house, on a street but recently built up. Hollyhocks are now well rooted in the garden of this temporary habitation, as well as at the author's summer home, and there will be some at the new parsonage, which is to be occupied next fall. As soon as the young plants bear seed, the author will be glad to share it with any friends who care for it, and he will always appreciate any that is sent to him. He will have little to spare before the summer of 1917.

Thanks are hereby expressed to the many correspondents who have written in appreciation of these Parables. To this appreciation, and a somewhat insistent request, is due their publication in book form.

First Church Study,
Oak Park, February, 1917.

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THE PARABLES OF SAFED THE SAGE

THE MISSISSIPPI MATE

NOW it came to pass as I journeyed that I came to a Great River, called in the tongue of the Red Man the Mississippi, which, being interpreted, is The Great Father of Waters; and I found a Ship, and I paid the Fare thereon, and I went into the Ship and sailed far down the River. And it came to pass that oftentimes the Whistle blew, and the Ship came to a Landing, and it Stopped. And certain of the sons of Ham that were on the Ship carried out of the Vessel bags of Potatoes, and barrels of Flour, and sacks of Corn, and many other articles of Food and Commerce, and carried them up the Bank and laid them there. And at each of the places where the Ship tarried, the Mate stood at the top of the bank, and loudly called to the Ethiopians who carried up the Freight. And thus he spake unto them, saying:

Why loiter ye? Hurry! Hurry! Suppose ye that this boat meaneth to tarry here until the middle of next week? Make haste, ye Ethiopian sluggards! Verily, ye earn not the salt that goeth into your hoe-cake! Hurry! Hurry! Get ye out with the freight!

And with many like Words did he Exhort them, and some Words that were Unlike.

Then my heart waxed Hot within me, and I said to my soul:

Behold, the men bear Burdens, and the bank is Steep. Why should he, who Carrieth no Load, stand at the top of the bank and Blaspheme against the men who already are Burdened? Ought he not either to carry on his own head a sack of Potatoes, or on his own back a Barrel of Flour, or on his own shoulder a Squalling Swine, or be silent while other men Struggle under their Loads?

But I observed that now and then for a moment the Mate was recalled to the Ship, and then the Work Slacked. And the Ethiopians quickly saw when he was gone, and they Lagged, and Laughed, and Loitered. But when the Mate returned they Hastened.

Yea, he Hastened Them.

Then I said to my soul, Behold, I am even as that Mate. For the Lord hath appointed me to stand on the bank of the River of Time, and exhort His People to be Diligent, for the stream Floweth Swiftly, and the Vessel must move. And many of my people bear Burdens, and I pity them under their loads. Yet do I stand on the bank and call out to them:

Hasten, ye Sinners, for the time is short. Think not to say within yourselves that ye have Done Well, for when ye have done your best, ye are Unprofitable Servants. Hasten, and work harder!

And for this they pay me my Salary. Yea, and by so doing I Earn It.

Yet while I thus Admonish them, my heart goeth out to them, for in truth they bear Heavy Burdens, and the bank is Steep.

But the Stream floweth on, and the Boat must sail. Wherefore when I think of these things, my heart findeth Companionship with the Mate, for but for the grace of God I should be as he.

Yea, my heart goeth out also to the sons of Ham, for their Burdens are heavy and the bank is steep. Yet I hear them Singing, and they tell me that they love the Mate, and would fight for him. And this I hope is true.

THE HOLLYHOCK

NOW it came to pass that after many years of living in one House, I removed and dwelt in another, and it was situated on a Street where few houses were builded, and on either side of it were Vacant Lots and Weeds. And they were not lovely to look upon. And on an evening as I returned to my Home, I beheld on one of the Vacant Lots hard by mine own House an Hollyhock; and it grew hardly a cubit from the Sidewalk. And it had grown Suddenly, and it stood well above the weeds. And when I saw it my heart rejoiced.

Then I rose early on the next morning, and I clothed myself scantily, and I went to the Basement, and I found a Spade and an Hoe, and I Digged about the Hollyhock, and I cut out the weeds from around it, and Loosened the earth at the Root thereof, and I said to myself, Lo, this Hollyhock shall be as my very own. And it shall grow tall, and bear many Blossoms, and my Heart shall find delight in it.

Now when I returned to my Home that night, behold, there were Tracks of Horses on the Concrete Walk, and on one side of the walk had been Mown a strip as wide

as a man might Step, and I knew that the Town had sent out the Municipal Mowing Machine to cut the Grass and Weeds where they grew over the Walks on Vacant Lots. Yea, I remembered that this was a Part of the Program of our Progressive Town Board to make our Town the City Beautiful.

And I hastened to my Hollyhock, and it was the evening of the very day whereon I had spent labor upon it. And behold, my Hollyhock was cut off Two Inches above the ground. And it lay Wilted and Dead.

And I made lamentation over it, and I remembered the day when the Lord spake unto His Prophet Jonah, saying Doest thou well to be angry for the Gourd whereon thou hast spent no Labor? The prophet answered, I do well to be angry, even unto death. And I knew how Jonah felt, save that he had spent no labor on the Gourd, but I had labored upon the Hollyhock that very morning, and I still had a blister upon one hand.

Then said I to my heart, Behold, ours is a Good Town, and it hath a Good Mayor, who attendeth my Church, and a Good Town Board, and they have sought to do a Good Thing for the Town. Nevertheless, they send out a brainless Machine that knoweth not a Hollyhock from a Burdock, and therewith they Beautify the Town by Cutting down my Lovely Flower.

And I knelt beside the Hollyhock, and I cried, O Lord, canst Thou not govern the world any better than this Town is Governed? Dost Thou rule through Blind and Indiscriminate Laws? Hast Thou not sent out Thy Mowing Machine which knoweth no more than the one that

hath slain my Hollyhock? Did not a wise man in the olden time grow sad with the Thought that there is one event to the righteous and the wicked? O Lord, is there no better way of Governing the world? For behold, how there lie in the Swath behind thine Indiscriminate Mower the Burdock and the Dandelion and the Sweet Clover and the Yellow Dock and the Golden Rod and the Rag Weed and the Hollyhock! Yea, Lord, and the Hollyhock was mine, and I loved it! Wherefore, O Lord, dost Thou and the Town Board Govern with a Mowing Machine? It is thus Thou dost seek to make a World Beautiful? Look at the Cruel Swath Thou cuttest through Human Life! Oh Lord, if Jonah might be angry when he saw the work of the Worm, what shall I say to my Sad Heart at the sight of this Remorseless Mower which men call the Course of Things but I have been taught to call the Providence of God?

Yet I remembered that after all, it were better for the Town Board to cut a Clean Swath beside the Concrete Walk, rather than that the Rank Weeds should overgrow it from Both Sides, being Covered with Dust and Hay Fever when the weather is Dry and Dripping with Water after a Rain. And I said, I will Honor the Mayor and the Town Board, for they have done a good thing. And I said of the Lord, Though He slay me, as the Town Board hath slain my Hollyhock, yet will I trust Him.

But I stooped and picked up the Wilted Hollyhock, and I took off my Hat and stood with Bared Head, and looked up to Heaven, and I said:

O God, Thou hast ordered that the just shall live by faith, and Thou hast Ordained that Faith shall not be purchased too cheaply; Thou requirest Hard Things of them that love Thee. O God, I trust Thee; nevertheless, if it may be so, Vouchsafe, that Thy great Mowing Machine may have a Little More Consideration for the Hollyhocks.

And if in this Prayer I sinned, may my God count it to me for a sin of folly, and not of wilful transgression. For my Faith in God abideth, though ofttimes I have wept over many wilted Hollyhocks. And I am sad at the sight of the Mowing Machine. And I have lost some very Tender Flowers. But I have faith that the God who taught me to Consider the Lilies will Consider my Hollyhock, yea, and the Little Tender Flowers.

THE THREE HOLLYHOCKS

NOW it came to pass on the day after the Municipal Mowing Machine had cut down the Hollyhock, that I went forth among men, and I met a man who hath much Worldly Wisdom, and my heart was heavy, and I communed with him. And I told him how I had found the Hollyhock, and had digged about it very early in the Morning, so that I did eat my Breakfast that day in the Sweat of my face, and how my Heart went out to the Hollyhock, and how I thought I should see Flowers blooming thereon, and how I returned at Night, and the Municipal Mowing Machine, which the Town had Procured, at the Request of the Civic League whereof he and I were both members, had cut down my Hollyhock, and left it to wither among the Thistles, and the Burdocks, and the Tall Grass.

And he heard me, and thus he Spake :

Even so is Life. There is no Law save Fate, and it Happeneth alike to the Evil and the Good. Thou hast spent Labor in Vain seeking in Thine own life to be a Hollyhock, for it is much More Fun to be a Burdock. The Blossom of the Burdock is quite as lovely as that of

the Hollyhock, if thou only Thinkest so, and behold how much Farther thou Scatterest Thine Influence if thou art a Burdock than if thou art an Hollyhock. Not only dost thou Stick to people who pass, but People go out of their way, however much they Pretend the Contrary, to pick up Burrs and carry them away. And in the End, one Fate happeneth to all. The great, unseeing Municipal Mowing Machine called Fate cometh down the Concrete Walk of Time, scarring its Smooth Surface with the Calks on the Shoes of the Horses that drag the Chariot of the Inevitable, and it Cutteth down both the Good and the Evil. And who shall know, in an hundred years, whether thou wert an Hollyhock, bearing stunted blossoms among the weeds that evermore outgrew thee, or whether thou Tookest Life as thou didst Find It, and played Right Lustily the part of a Merry Burdock, ere the Machine Came Down the Pike?

Now, when he said these things to me, behold, mine Heart grew more heavy, and I turned away from men, and walked back toward mine own House, that hardly yet did seem an Home.

And, as I approached my Dwelling, I saw Fresh Tracks of Horses upon the Concrete Walk, and I looked, and behold, the Municipal Mowing Machine had come down the Other Side of the Same Walk.

And I said, Behold, I care not. They have cut down my Hollyhock; I will Harden mine Heart, and Care not What They Do.

But as I neared my dwelling, I beheld a Strange Thing. There were Three Hollyhocks, standing on the Other

Side of the Walk. And the Weeds had Hidden them, so that I had Discovered them not. But the Man who Drove the Municipal Mowing Machine had Seen them, and had Turned his Sickle Aside, and Had Backed his Horses, and Bidden them Gee and Haw, and Come-around-here-Dick, and Giddap-Sally, and had cut the Weeds, even the Burdocks, and the Thistles, and the Yellow Dock, and the Dandelions, and had left the Three Hollyhocks standing, which I had never seen, nor on them had Spent Labor; yet were they left for me.

Now when I Saw This, I said to mine Heart, Behold, I think I know the Man who Driveth the Municipal Mowing Machine, and I forget whether he is a Swede, or an Italian, or a Parthian, or a Scythian, or a Dweller in Mesopotamia, but I shall go to the Town Hall, and there Deposit a Dime, and say, O Driver of the Municipal Mowing Machine, Go Buy thyself a Good, Cold Ice-Cream Soda, and if thou Prefer, as I fear thou dost, a Good Cigar, thou mayest buy it instead, so the smoke of thy Torment come not nigh me. For thou didst see too late on yesterday that thou hadst cut my Hollyhock, and on this day didst behold from thine exalted throne on the Mowing Machine, and look down and see in the Weeds the three Hollyhocks which I had not seen, and thine eye did pity them, and thou didst Gee and Haw, and Back-up-there, and Now-Giddap, and save for me Three Hollyhocks. Behold, I will dig about them, and they shall blossom for me, and be to me in place of the Hollyhock that I have lost.

And I said to mine Heart, Can this Unlettered Swede, or Italian, or Dweller in Mesopotamia, Gee and Haw and spare for me Three Hollyhocks, and cannot the Mighty God, who looketh down from an Higher Throne than the seat of a Municipal Mowing Machine, Gee and Haw if that be Necessary, and Spare the Soul of him that Trusteth in the Most High? Yea, and even if one Machine cut down all men alike, would it not be better for a Little Time to be an Hollyhock than a Burdock?

And I went and digged about the root of the Three Hollyhocks that God had given me, though I had not labored on them, and the Municipal Mower had saved for me, though I had not besought him.

Yea, I went back, and found again the Root of the Hollyhock that had been Cut Off, and I prayed my God that it might Spring again from the Earth, and Blossom yet. And I comforted mine Heart with the Faith that this might be so.

CONCERNING VACATIONS

NOW I dwelt in a city and the labor of the weeks was heavy, so it came to pass as Summer Approached, that every year I went on a Vacation. And ofttimes I rode upon a Stage in the hills of Vermont, the Driver whereof was a man of experience. And he spake to me ofttimes, and every year this was the burden of his complaint:

Behold, thou comest here again on thy vacation, being a man who toilest not, nor spinnest, nor gatherest into barns, and the Greater Part of those who ride on my Stage in the Good Old Summer Time come Likewise; but I drive this Condemned Old Stage Year in and Year out, Wet or Dry, Hot or Cold, and for Forty Years I have had no Vacation.

Now when I had heard this many times, I wrote to the Manager of the Stage Route, saying:

Behold this Driver of thy Company hath served long, and hath never had a Vacation; give him Two Weeks, that he may have a Vacation like unto the Rest of Mankind.

And they did as I made request of them; and they sent Another Driver to Drive the Stage for Two Weeks, that he might have a Vacation.

And the Next Summer as I came that way, I asked him concerning his Vacation, and where and how he had Spent it.

And he relieved himself of a burden he had been carrying, namely, a mouthful of Tobacco Juice, and thus he made answer:

The first Day, being Monday, I rode with the New Driver to show him the Road; and because he was slow to Learn I rode with him also on Tuesday. And on Wednesday I feared lest the Bay Mare should have cast a Shoe, and I rode with him again, and stopped at the Blacksmith Shop in the place midway, for there dwelleth the only Smith who knoweth how to Shoe Horses as they ought to be shod. And on Thursday Widow Skiles was going to Town, and I knew her Trunk must go, and I feared lest that Substitute Driver should have forgotten it. And on Friday it looked as if it would Rain, and was no kind of Day for a man to be starting on his Vacation, so I rode on the stage that Day also. And on Saturday it did Rain, and was no kind of Day for a man to be sitting around inside the House with Nothing to Do, so I rode again that day. And on Monday there were a lot of City Folks who had been out in the Hills for the Week-End, going back to the City, and some of them were a Leetle Mite p'tic'lar, and I thought I might as well Go Long, and see them git on the Train. And Tuesday I realized that the Time was more'n Half Gone, and a Feller

couldn't do Nothing in One Week Nohow, so I just con-tinnered to Ride on the Stage with the Substitute Driver, and Show him How. And by the End of the Second Week he was a Pretty Good Driver, and if I could have had a Vacation then, I could have trusted him to run the Stage.

Thus spake to me the Driver, who had always complained that he had never had a Vacation.

And I meditated much concerning what he had said to me.

And I said, O my God, let me not be one of those who constantly complain of the blessings they do not have, and who Would not Know What to Do with them if they had **them**.

THE SEVEN TARGETS

NOW in the City where I dwelt were divers Shooting Galleries, and some of them charge Five Cents for Three Shots, and there were others that Gave Five Shots for Five Cents. And I Noticed when I passed their gates, and if the Sign Read Three Shots for Five Cents, I entered Not; but if it Read Five Shots for Five Cents, then I entered.

And one of the Galleries where I went had Seven Targets, all in One Row. And the Targets had each of them a Bullseye. And the Targets were each of the Same Size, about a Cubit in breadth; but the Bullseyes were Divers. For the one on the Right hand had a Bullseye as small as the Fingernail of a man's Hand, and the one on the left had a Bullseye as large as a Silver Dollar, and those that were between Grew as the Targets were placed from the Right side to the left. And there were on each Target Rings round the Bullseye, from the Bullseye to the Outer Edge of the Target. And he who Hit the Bullseye on any Target whatsoever caused a Bell to Ring.

Now, in my Youth I could Shoot Some, and in my Ripper Years I can Shoot a Little. So it was my custom to

Choose a Target near the Middle, and Sometimes I made the Bell to Ring, perhaps twice or thrice out of Five.

But it came to pass on a day that I entered a Gallery, and laid down a silver Coin which was the Fourth Part of a Dollar, and the Man gave me Four Nickles and a Gun. And I took the Gun, and I Said, I have not practiced of late; I will take the Large Bullseye. So I shot, and I Hit It. And I shot again, and I Hit it Again. And thus I did Five Times.

And it Pleased me that I had Hit the Bullseye and Rung the Bell Five times.

And I handed the Man another Nickel, and I Hit the Bullseye Five Times More. And I was yet more pleased.

And I gave him Another Nickel, and Yet another Five Times I Did the Same.

And I said within my heart, Behold, am not I a good Shot?

And I gave him Another Nickel.

And the Man took the Nickel, and gave me Another Gun, for I had shot out all that the First Gun contained; moreover, it needed Cleaning, by reason of the Shooting I had done. Now the man who kept the Gallery Had been regarding me, and I thought he had been Admiring my Skill, but he had Not. For when he handed me the Second Gun, and taken my Fourth Nickel he spake to me thus:

Now if all you want is to Hear Yourself Ring the Big Bell, you can Probably Continue to Do That for a Considerable Time to Come; but if you really want to Improve Your Shooting, you will never shoot at anything

but the Smallest Bullseye. You will put your shots into quite as Small a Circle, and you will have the Advantage of Knowing Just How Much you lack of Being a Really Good Shot.

And the word went to my heart.

So I walked to the other end, and I shot five times at the Small Bullseye, and I hit it Not Once. But all my Shots were close in, and every one of them would have Rung the Big Bell. So I gave him my Last Nickel, and I Shot Five times more and out of the Five Shots I Rang the Small Bell Twice.

And though it sounded not so loud as the Big Bell, yet I knew in my heart it was Better Shooting, and that it had Compelled me to do My Best.

Then I said in my heart, O my God, I have lived an Upright Life among men, and often have they Told me So; but I fear lest I have been Shooting at the Big Bell. Mine have not been the Cruel Temptations of Some of my Fellow Men, yet I have Had Pride that I was better than Some of them. O my God, I will seek henceforth to Shoot at the Smallest Target. Then shall I know how much I lack of being really a Good Shot.

And I told the Parable to some of my Fellowmen, and I said, Behold how I went in to the House of Shooting, and I heard a sermon that divided between the joints and marrow of my soul. And they, too, were humbled when they heard it.

THE FOUR HOLLYHOCKS

NOW at the end of the Summer, as the Autumn drew near, I returned to mine Home after a Season in which I had Wandered afar, and the Weeds had grown thickly about the house, so that I hastened and called a Man to cut the Same before they could go to Seed ; for I purposed in mine heart that in another year we should have Grass, and maybe Flowers.

And I sought my Hollyhocks, that I might see how it had fared with them. And behold, the Three Hollyhocks that grew in one Cluster by the Concrete walk had Grown and Blossomed, and been Broken off ; for there had been passersby who Plucked the same when they were fair to look upon. But my One Hollyhock, over which I had mourned because it had been cut off, had grown up from the root, and blossoming low among the Weeds, it bore Lovely Blossoms.

And I cried out in mine heart, O my God, the First hath been Last and the Last First ; and that which in the beginning seemed to have been cut down untimely, hath Blossomed more Beautifully than all the rest.

And I knew it was a parable, that God had sent me a lesson that I should not consider the hopeless things of life to be hopeless, but that I should remember how it might fare better with them than with the rest.

And the man came to cut the Weeds.

And while he was yet coming, lo, I went to meet him. And he was from Italy, and had wrought in the Gardens and Vineyards there.

And I said to him :

Beholdest thou this one Hollyhock ?

And he answered, Si, signor. For so is the speech of Italy when a man will say, Yes, sir.

And I led him across the Walk and I said :

Beholdest thou these three Hollyhocks ?

And again he answered me as before.

And I said, All these have come up through great tribulation. Yet have they all kept their Life, yea, and all of them have borne Seed. See thou hurt them not with thy Scythe nor yet with thy Spade, but dig them up carefully, and set them out in my Garden. And I will spare them as a man spareth that which he loveth, and I will keep the weeds away from them, and they shall blossom in my Garden.

And again he answered, Si, signor.

And I said to the Lord, O my God, even that Italian, who knoweth in part, and to whom I prophesy in part, understandeth somewhat of my plan, and I understand a very little of Thine. And I believe that as I have dealt

with the Hollyhocks, so thou wilt deal with frail men and women, and that they shall yet be taken from among the Weeds, and made to Blossom in the Garden of God.

And the Spirit of the Lord whispered in my heart that it was even so.

THE HOT BOX

NOW I rode upon a Swift Train called the Limited,
and it was Going Some.

And suddenly it stopped at a place in the midst of the
Tall Grass; neither was there a Station in the place. And
all the Passengers Smelt an Unholy Smell. And divers
of them Got Out.

And, behold, from the Axle of one of the Wheels came
forth Flame and Smoke.

And one of the Passengers said,
It is an Overheated Journal.

But one of the Train Men answered and said,
She's got a Hot Box, and it's Dollars to Doughnuts
she's got a Busted Brass.

Then they carried Water from the tender of the Loco-
motive, and poured on Seven Buckets full, so that the
Water ran all about the Car Wheels; and the Water
Hissed when it touched the Axle, and the Steam did
Arise.

And when it ceased to give forth Steam then jammed
they in Cotton Waste, and poured in Dope; and the Con-
ductor shouted, All Aboard.

And the Train moved on.

But in ten miles it Stopped ; and we smelled the same Infernal Smell ; for so I may call it at a venture, having never smelled the Smoke of Gehenna, but thinking it like unto this Smell.

And seven times we Stopped and flooded it with Water, and Chucked in Waste, and poured in Dope.

And finally we came to a side track, and the Conductor yelled,

All passengers take the Rear Car. We're going to Cut This Out.

And they Cut it Out.

And as it stood on the Siding the Smoke of its Torment Still arose.

And I considered what I had seen.

For a Church is a Railway Train, and every Member is a Wheel. And although there be Flat Wheels, and Wobbly Wheels, and Lopsided Wheels, still do they go around, and go as the Train Goeth. But if so be that there be a member who is Touchy, verily a Church with One Such Member is like unto a Train that hath an Hot Box.

And if so be the Hot Box is in the Choir and gets Het Up because another Member of the Choir singeth more Solos ; or if so be the Hot Box is in the Sunday School, and beginneth to Smoke Up whenever the Superintendent Requesteth all Teachers to Prepare their Lessons and Come on Time, and One Teacher declareth she thinketh it Horrid thus to be Bawled Out ; or whether the Hot Box

be in the Board of Deacons, still is an Hot Box a very Undesirable Citizen.

And I thought of these things.

And the Spirit of the Lord said unto me, Safed.

And I answered, Here am I.

And the Spirit said: Safed, thou hast considered the Evil Case of a Church that hath an Hot Box in the Choir, or in the Sunday School, or in the Board of Deacons. See that in thy Church there be no Hot Box in the Pulpit.

And I considered all these things.

THE TRANSPLANTED HOLLYHOCKS

NOW, after the man of Italy had digged up my Hollyhocks, even the one Holyhock which the Mower had cut down and the Three Hollyhocks which the Mower had spared, I walked in my Garden, and the Hollyhocks drooped and were withered, and I poured Water on the root and came again another day and they had Revived. Yet they looked at me Reproachfully and said to me, Why has thou dealt so with us? For verily we did think of thee that thou wast our friend. And were we not growing very well by the Concrete Walk until thou didst up-rot us? Verily, thou art very Cruel .

And I could not speak to them so that they would understand, yet I said to them in the words of my Lord, What I do, ye know not now, but ye shall know hereafter.

And it grieved me that my Hollyhocks doubted my goodness, for in Love had I Chastened them and not in Anger.

And I came yet another day, and behold, they were putting forth Feeble Blossoms, in haste if they might bear seed before the frost. And I admired their Enterprise, but I knew that it was not well, and I took my knife

and cut down the stalks, for I knew that what they needed now was to root deeply in the earth that they might bring forth blossoms hereafter.

Howbeit the Hollyhocks understood not that I was kind to them, and they thought unkindly of me in their hearts, as I had thought of the Mower, but I had come that they might have Life and have it more Abundantly.

Now, I know not what goeth on under the ground, but now I have faith for my Hollyhocks, that they are taking root downward and that they shall bear fruit upward, and that my labor shall not be in vain; yea, and that their faith also shall not be in vain. For I think they still have faith in me, though they doubt; yea, they believe, as flowers may believe, and I will help their unbelief.

And I entered my Study where I keep the Philosopher's Stone, and I took down a book which telleth about Flowers, and I opened it and I laid the Philosopher's Stone upon the Book to keep it open, and therein I read that the Hollyhock grew in Palestine, even in the Land where Jesus lived, and that it was unknown to Europe till the time of the Crusades, and that the Crusaders who went to Fight and to save the Holy Land from the hand of the Turk and to recover the Holy Sepulcher, plucked seed and brought back with them and called the name of the plant the Holy Rod, or Hollyhock, even as it is called to this day. And I wondered how the flowers had come to me across the ocean, through seed preserved and roots transplanted, far back to the days when brave Men Fighting for the Faith plucked Seed in the Land where Jesus Lived and transmitted the same to me. And I thought

of all the love that in many gardens had preserved the life of Hollyhocks since the day when Crusaders came back from the Holy Land bringing the Hollyhock seed.

And I said to myself that wherever I shall live there will I have Hollyhocks blooming, for they shall be to me a symbol of human courage and fidelity, yea, and of a Divine Providence which now we trust and cannot wholly understand.

Yea, and if God will, these very Hollyhocks, even the one Hollyhock that the Mower cut down, and the three Hollyhocks which the Mower spared, but which were broken by the wayside, will I preserve. And they shall be mine in the day when I make up my Jewels.

And though my life be broken, and many of my hopes cut off, yet may God so deal with me. And wherein I misunderstand and doubt, may God not reckon it to me for Sin, but deal gently with me as I have dealt with His Hollyhocks and mine.

THE STEAMBOAT

NOW I came to one of the Great Lakes, on which was a Steamboat, and I paid one dollar to the Purser, and rode from one city to another, yea, from the third hour of the morning to the fifth hour of the evening.

And there were few passengers on the boat, and I wandered whither I listed. And every man spake Kindly to me, and everything upon the boat was as if it had been mine own.

I climbed upon the Hurricane Deck, and the Pilot spake to me, saying,

Thou mayest enter.

So I entered, and he showed me how to steer the ship, and how to Ring the Bells that gave Signals to the Engineer whether to go or to halt, and whether to Sail Fast or Slow.

Now while we talked there came one of the Passengers, a man whom already I had seen, and he asked a Civil Question of the Pilot, and the Pilot answered him roughly, and the man asked another Question and the Pilot answered not, but pointed to a sign where it was written

HOLD NO CONVERSATION WITH THE MAN AT THE WHEEL.

Then I went down into the Lower Parts of the Ship, and I spake with the Engineer, who showed me his Engine, and how the Wheels went Round, and the Propeller did Propel, and while we were yet speaking the same Passenger came down, and he spake to the Engineer, and the Engineer was Rude to him.

And into whatsoever part of the ship I went, there I saw him, and in every place it was the same. Yea, the men who were Kind to me were all Harsh to him. Yea, when the time came for Dinner, the Cook did enter the Dining Room and curse him in the presence of the Other Passengers.

And I spake unto the Captain of the Ship, and said,

Who is this poor man whom every man seemeth to hate, whose hand like that of Ishmael is against every man's hand, and who alone of all men upon board hath no rights on this ship?

And the Captain made answer, He is the Man who Owneth this Boat.

And the Captain told me that the Boat had cost Ten Thousand Dollars and was Losing Money every Trip, and the owner had Come on Board to Learn the Reason Why, and how every man was Wroth with him, and Despised him, he being only a Rich Man who knew nothing about Ships, and could only Poke his Infernal Nose into business that he could not Understand. Yea, the Captain said that he and all men on the Ship would Rejoice if the Old Duffer should fall overboard.

Now I meditated much concerning this matter. For he had paid Ten Thousand Dollars and had nothing but Sorrows. Yea, what he had once counted for Gains, those now were Loss. And he had nothing on the Ship Save only Anxiety and Abuse.

Now I had paid only One Dollar, and everything on the Ship was Mine; and when the Ship came to Shore I had no further Care whether the Voyage had paid or Not, nor whether tomorrow would be Fair and Prosperous, or whether it would be Stormy and Dangerous.

And I considered how much Richer I was than the Man who Thought he Owned the Boat. Yea, I considered how he had Fooled Himself, for he had paid Ten Thousand Dollars, and owned Nothing. But I, for One Day and for One Dollar, had Owned the Boat. Yea, and if I go there tomorrow, and have One Dollar more, I can Buy Her Again.

Behold how Rich am I, and how Poor is the Man who must add to his Ten Thousand Dollars the losses for Coal and Wages and Insurance, and who owneth Nothing, not even the Respect of the Men he Feedeth.

And the Spirit of the Lord Said to me, Take heed and be not covetous, for the man who is Richer than thou, he is Poorer.

And I knew this was True; and I considered these things.

THE HOLLYHOCK IN THE STONE PILE

NOW after the man from Italy had cut the weeds, and had transplanted my Hollyhocks, even the one Hollyhock that had been cut off by the Municipal Mower, and the Three Hollyhocks that grew in a cluster, and had set them out in my Garden, the rain fell on the earth, and the Hollyhocks flourished, and I saw them daily and was glad. And I wept for more worlds to conquer, and I wondered if there might be more Hollyhocks among the Weeds. And I said to my Soul, Though I have four Hollyhocks, yet am I not content if there be another, struggling for life among the weeds, for my Garden is wide, and as yet there is little in it. And I went among the Weeds, and I sought, and, behold, another Hollyhock.

And I returned, and brought a spade, and again I went among the Weeds which grew as high as my Head. And I set down the Spade on one side of the Hollyhock, and the spade was Stopped by a Stone. And a Mosquito bit me upon the Hand.

And I set down the Spade upon another side, and the Spade struck another Stone; and a Mosquito bit me upon the Cheek.

And I set down the Spade upon the third side, and the spade struck another Stone; and a Mosquito bit me upon the Forehead.

And I set down the Spade upon the fourth side, and the spade struck another stone, yea, more than one; and the Mosquitoes bit me upon the back of my neck. And great was the number of the Stones in that place; for some man had hauled a Cartload of broken Stone and Dumped it upon that Vacant Lot. But, however so many the number of the Stones in the Pile, the number of the Mosquitoes was greater. For it had rained much and was to rain again. And the Mosquitoes gathered about me in a Cloud, and there was no part of me which they did not Bite.

And I digged about the Root of the Hollyhock, and I plucked away stones with my Hand. And I removed the Hollyhock out of its place. But it came away with no Earth upon the Root thereof. Yea, so close had it grown among the Stones that I tore the root in getting it out, and Bruised it with the Spade and with the Stones. And I feared that it would Die; for it was sore bruised. Yea, though I sought to be Careful, yet did I hasten, for the Mosquitoes were Something Fierce, and they came yet more, And Then Some.

And I set out the Hollyhock from the Stone Pile near unto the Four Hollyhocks, even the one Hollyhock which the Mower had cut off, and the Three Hollyhocks that grew in a Cluster.

And the Hollyhock that I had taken from the Stone Pile reproached me, and said to me, Surely thou art a

Cruel Master, and I am in thy hands as Clay in the hands of a Potter. Was I not doing well in my Stone Pile, and asking no favors of thee? Wherefore didst thou take me from my Sheltered Home among the Weeds and Rocks, and Cut me and Bruise me, and leave me here Unsheltered and Half Dead?

And I well-nigh reproached myself, especially when the Mosquito bites began to Swell.

And I prayed to my God, and I said, O God, who canst not be content while any Human Hollyhock is growing in the Weeds, Thou knowest my heart. Thou art not happy with Ninety and Nine Hollyhocks blooming in thy Garden if One Hollyhock be struggling for Life in the Stone Pile. Thou knowest, that it was not in my heart to Bruise the Hollyhock. Yea, O my God, thou hast been bitten with the Poisonous Mosquito Bites of Human sin; Thou hast suffered in order to redeem men, and I have resented Thy kindnesses that Hurt, even as did the Hollyhock resent my Bruising Kindness.

And I felt that I understood God.

But still, as I meditated, I cried out, And yet, O God, our cases are not Identical. I have but lately come here to live Among the Weeds, and I am doing my Best to make it Better; but Thou hast been here a Long Time. Why dost Thou not Make it Better Faster? How Long, O Lord, O how Long? Yea, Lord, and I did not plant the Hollyhock in the Stone Pile, but pitied it when I saw it there. Thou, O God, are Righteous; why hast Thou planted any Human Life in the midst of the Rocks and Weeds and Mosquitoes?

Alas, after all, I am not much wiser than my Hollyhocks. Then I remembered that I had been kind to Five Hollyhocks, and for a Single Season, yea, for a few days, and I remembered the Mercies of my God to the millions of men, throughout all the Suffering Ages.

And I was Humbled, and I believed.

THE BALDHEADED BARBER

NOW it fell on a day tha I entered the Establishment of a Tonsorial Artist, which is being interpreted a Barber Shop. And I sat and waited till the Barber, with a loud Voice, cried, Next, and I seated myself in his Chair. And he wielded over me divers Deadly Weapons, and therewith he cut my Hair, and trimmed my Beard. And I sat and looked at myself in the Mirror, and I saw myself in a great Bib and Tucker, with patches of Hair falling down the front of the Same, and reflecting itself in the Glass. And what he was doing to me I saw as in a Glass darkly, and what he was saying to me was Many things on Divers Topics, for he was a man of Fluent Speech.

And after I had been shorn both as to head and my beard, he passed his hand over my head, and said :

Thy scalp is not very clean. Thou hast need of a Shampoo.

And I consented.

And he soaped my head, and washed it, and rubbed it, and twisted it upon my neck until it was nigh unto breaking off.

Then again he passed his hand across my head, and he said:

The hair upon thy head groweth thin. Let me rub into thy scalp some of my famous Hair Restorer. It will make hair grow upon the top of a Cowhide Trunk.

But I said unto him, I am not a Cowhide Trunk.

And he said, Thou wilt soon be as bald as one if thou apply not my famous Hair Restorer.

And I asked, Speakest thou as the friend of Humanity or as a man who hath Hair Restorer for sale?

And he answered, I speak as a friend of Humanity, nevertheless, for the Hair Restorer and the Rubbing in thereof thou shalt pay to me the fourth part of a Dollar, in addition to what thou already owest me.

Now it came to pass as he spake these words, I looked in the glass, and behold he stood behind me, with the Bottle in his Right Hand, and with his Left Hand spread ready to Rub It In, and I saw in the glass his eager face, and above it his own head. And he leaned forward as he spake, so that I saw in the Glass the top of his head, and behold it was Bald.

Then spake I unto him, and said, O thou Friend of Humanity, who sellest Hair Restorer and thy Soul for the fourth part of a Dollar, keep thou thy Medicine, and use it upon thine own head. For I have ten times as much Hair on the outside of my head as thou hast, and much more that is worth while within it.

And he was wroth, and he combed my hair with fury, and dug the Bristles of the Brush into my Scalp, and

added a Dime to my Bill. Nevertheless my heart rejoiced that I had spoken unto him as I did.

Then said I to my soul, I will take heed to my ways, lest I become as he. For I go forth among men and ask them to buy of me Wisdom and Virtue and Righteousness. So will I pray night and day unto the God of heaven that I may be able to recommend among men the Truth which God hath revealed unto me, and that no man reproach me with the baldness of mine own soul.

So shall I learn wisdom from the folly of the Bald-headed Barber.

THE WOODPECKER

NOW, on a morning I entered my Study, and I sat me down to read a book by a Learned Man on The Uniformity of Nature. And I thought much about the Reasons Why the Heat that Burneth a man on one day doth not Freeze him on the next, and why the Sun which Riseth in the East a part of the Time doth not Rise in the West the Remainder of the Time, and why the Law of Gravitation which sometimes pulleth the Apple Down doth not sometimes Hurl it Up.

And These Studies proved a Weariness to the Flesh, so that I opened my window for Fresh Air. And immediately there flew in a Woodpecker. And no sooner was he in than he wished to be out. And he circled Twice or Thrice about my Ceiling, and then flew swiftly toward another Window which was not open, and Struck it with all his Force, so that he Fell to the floor and lay there as if he were Dead. And I Rose, and Stood, and looked down at him. And I touched him not, but it was revealed to me that in his Aching Red Head he was thinking thoughts like these :

Behold, hitherto have I flown wherever there was Transparent Space, and have Struck Nothing. But I

have been Knocked Down and well-nigh Killed while flying through Space in which I could see plainly. Yea, and beyond were Trees, and the Free Air of Spring. Never again shall I trust in the Uniformity of Nature; and the ways of the Lord are not equal.

Then I left him, and I opened my windows from the top downward and he rose and flew straight at one of them, and was gone.

And I, who am but very little wiser than he, meditated concerning the men I had known who suddenly come Up Against a new experience which they are unable to Catalogue among their Theories of life, where something which they see not riseth up before them and layeth them low, so that they cry out in their anguish that the Lord hath forgotten to be Gracious, and that His Mercy is clean gone forever. For I have heard them think aloud even as I heard the woodpecker with the Aching Red Head.

Now the Uniformity of Nature is the Veracity of God. Yet hath God ways that are not as the ways of men. So I besought my God that he would give me Grace to Trust Him when I fly through what seemeth Clear Space and come Up against Something.

THE DUMMY ORGAN PIPE

NOW it came to pass as I journeyed, that I came upon a Great Church, which the Builders were making Greater. And they pulled down a certain portion of the Wall, and builded it Westward, and they removed the Organ, and builded one Greater. Now, the Organ that had been within the church had been sweet of tone, but it was deemed Too Small, and, moreover, it had grown Rickety, so that it Creaked, and Squawked, and did those things which it Ought Not to have done, and left undone the Things which it Ought to have done. Wherefore they removed it. But the Pipes therein were still good, and they Saved them with Care, to be builded into another and a Greater Organ.

Now, the old Organ had never been so great as it seemed, but had been Builded into a Larger Space than it could Occupy. And one-half of the Pipes in the Front Row were Real Pipes and the other half were Dummies. And the organ had stood for forty years, and no man sitting in front of it could have told that Half the Pipes were Dummies, nor could he have told which were the Real Pipes, and which were the Dummies.

But when the Organ was removed, the Real Pipes were Packed with Care, and sent away to a Great Factory, there to be Rebuilt into some other Organ. But the Dummy Pipes, some larger and some smaller, were cast into the junk to be hauled away into the Valley of Hinnom, which same is a valley outside the city gates, like unto that which near Jerusalem is called Hell, where the worm dieth not, because it feedeth ever upon refuse, and the fire is not quenched, because ever they haul to it more junk.

Now as the Dummy Pipes waited for the coming of the Hoky-Poky Man, to haul them to the Valley of Hinnom, one of the workmen took the largest of the pipes, which was Twelve Cubits long, and was like unto a Real Pipe which might have given forth the tone of Middle C in the Open Diapason, but which had never given forth a tone, for it was a Dummy. And the Workman took it, and placed it at the end of a Sewer Pipe, for the same had been broken apart in the building; yet the Sewer was still in use in the older part of the Sanctuary, but there was need for certain days that a Temporary Pipe should be placed there, lest the Filth should Run out in the place where workmen wrought; and there was more work that had to be done before the Plumbers could make the Sewer Connection. So I came and beheld, and Lo, the Beautiful Pipe, that was Twelve Cubits in Length, and Half a Cubit broad, was in use as a drain for the Drainage of Filth.

And I was displeased, and I sought out the Master of the Workmen, and I said, What do ye, defiling a Pipe that

hath had its place in the Organ? Surely ye have done an Unholy thing!

And he said, That pipe is doing good service, and it had been thrown away, and it was good for nothing else. Wherefore should we spend money and have the work delayed, to buy a Pipe when here is one at our Hand that is Big Enough, and Long enough for our needs?

Nay, said I, but not this Pipe. For this hath had its part in the Worship of the House of God; and even though it be cast aside I would have it treated Reverently.

But the Master of the Workmen spake to me sternly, and he said, Business is Business. Take heed to thy Preaching and I will attend to my Building. We must use what Material we can from the Old Building to save us Money on the New. For what with the High Cost of Living, and the peril of Strikes, it is hard enough to pay Expenses as it is.

Then said I, Lo, I am a poor man, yet will I pay for a Sheet Iron Pipe for that place, that a Thing be not Defiled with Filth that hath had a place in the worship of God.

But the Master Builder said to me, Keep thy Money, and be not too free with it. As for the Pipe, trouble not thyself. Forty years it stood in the House of God, falsely proclaiming itself to give forth sweet Music, and it gave none. This is the first time since it was made that it hath ever been of Any Use under Heaven. Let it be used for the One Thing it is good for, and then let it go with the Junk.

Then I went my way, and I meditated, and I said, Lo, this is the portion of the Hypocrite; for though he stand in his place in the House of God for Forty years, yet at the end shall he appear as a Hollow Mockery, and God shall find for him whatever Place he still can be of use, but it may not be a Pleasant Occupation.

And many times thereafter I thought about the Dummy Organ Pipe, and the Dummy Christian, And I said, Lo, if it must be that any man whose life was a Sham shall go to the Valley of the Sons of Hinnom, the ways of the Lord are just and righteous altogether.

But I remembered that the Dummy Pipe was Decorated with Gold Leaf, and it was good to look upon. And I sorrowed at the base use to which it was put. But I could not deny that It was useful at the end.

And I considered these things.

WHAT THE WOODPECKER DID NEXT

NOW it came to pass nine days after the Woodpecker had flown in at my Window, and I had let him out again, after that he had bumped his head once against the glass, that I sat in my Study, reading a great Book, and there came a Crash against my Window, like as if a Brick had been thrown by a Suffraget. But the Window brake not. And I rose and looked out of my Window, and, lo, there lay on the ground a fluttering Woodpecker. And I looked on him in pity, for he lay on his back, and he fluttered; but after that he had fluttered for a season he ceased. And I took him up, and behold he was dead.

And I was sure in my heart it was the same Woodpecker that had Visited me before. And it was given to me that I might know what he had Reasoned in his Foolish Red Head. And this is what he had said:

Lo, that was a most interesting Adventure that I had, for I did fly into that House and out again, and though I bumped my Head so that it ached, yet that could not Happen Again if I should fly Hard Enough. Go to now, and let me try that Risky Stunt again.

And the Woodpecker's conscience said to him, Go not thither again, lest it go ill with thee. Count thyself Mighty Lucky that thou didst get out; now stay out.

But he Hearkened not, and he Flew Violently against my Window, so that his Neck Brake and he died.

And I sorrowed for the Bird, and I said,

Oh, my God, I have been as foolish as he; for oft hast Thou delivered me from my folly, and I have gone at it again, even as this poor foolish Bird. Yea, and of my fellowmen there be many whose Souls are as Redheaded as this Bird.

And I prayed my God who minded the Fallen Sparrow to be more merciful to birds and men than their folly deserveth.

And I took up the body of the Woodpecker and I buried it nigh unto the roots of the Hollyhocks I had planted.

THE TWELVE HOLLYHOCKS

NOW on the Morning After Thanksgiving, I woke from my slumber, and I said within my Soul, To-day is Friday, and to-morrow will be Saturday, and the next day is the Sabbath; and I have two Sermons to write, and many more things to do. I will Hasten to my Study and Lock my Door, and My Labor shall be Strenuous.

And while I was speaking, behold there came Men, and Horses, and Plows, and Scrapers, and they began to Work on the Vacant Lot that lieth North of my House, even the House that had been Moved, and set among the Weeds. And I went out and spake to them, and I said, What do ye?

And one of them answered, We are to Excavate a great Hole, for here shall be builded an House much greater than thine, even an Apartment Building, which is, being interpreted, an House of Flats.

And as I ate my Breakfast, I thought within myself, Peradventure there are other Hollyhocks in the Weeds where they Plow.

And I hastened, and I took a Spade and a Coal Hod, and I went among the Tall Weeds.

And one of the men spake to his fellow, and said, What will this Old Duffer do?

And he asked me, saying, Diggest thou for Buried Treasure? If there is a Gold Mine here and thou knowest it by means of thy Philosopher's Stone, wilt thou not let us in on the Ground Floor?

And I said, I dig for something more precious than gold, even a thing that hath Life; that mysterious Quality which no man can Define, which proceedeth from the Life of God, and in thee and me maketh Manhood, but in this flower it maketh Beauty. Knowest thou not, O Man, that the Hollyhock came to us from Palestine, and was brought to Europe and thence Hither at the Time of the Crusades? It may be that the Flower from which these sprang grew once in the Garden of Mary, and the Child Jesus may have gathered the Seed.

And the man returned to his fellows, and he said, The Old Fellow Diggeth up a Flower, and he speaketh Most Interesting concerning it. And I heard him tell them what I had told him.

Now I digged in Divers Places, and I found Twelve Hollyhocks. And I set them all in a Row just South of where my North Fence is to be Buildd. For I said, These Hollyhocks need Shelter from the Cold Winds. Mayhap they will bloom even earlier than those already in my garden.

And I found a place where Cockleburs were thick, and among them I saw an Hollyhock. And it had grown so

in the Weeds it looked like a Weed, and at first I believed not that it was an Hollyhock. And I said to myself, Thou hast enough. Behold, in digging one Hollyhock from that place thou shalt transplant also Ten Cockleburs, and get an hundred of them on thy clothes. But I digged it out, for it was not my will that one of those Hollyhocks should perish.

Now I labored till I took off my Coat and my Vest; and the Palm of my Hand grew sore. But I gave no rest to my Flesh till I had digged out every Hollyhock I could find. And I leaned on my Spade, and I prayed to my God, and I said, Bless thou my Hollyhocks, and make them grow; and as I have dealt with them, so deal thou, O my God, with the Belated and the Disinherited and the Sincursed among the sons of men.

And the Men who drove the Horses were careful not to drive their horses upon my Twelve Hollyhocks.

THE WHITE ELEPHANT

NOW the Women of the City where I live sought how they might secure a sum of money for a Children's Hospital, and they devised a White Elephant Sale. And the meaning of the words was this, that when any Woman had in her house something which she wished to Get Rid Of, she called it a White Elephant, and she gave it to the Sale.

Now as I walked in the City, I drew nigh unto the place, and I went within. And there were Books and Bonnets and Baskets, and Clothes and Candlesticks, and Pots and Pictures, and divers kinds of Tools, and Many Things of Other Sorts. And a Damsel said to me, Wilt Thou not buy of me something? And in her Booth were Earthen Vessels and Vessels of Brass. And she said, Behold this Lovely Vase. Thou couldest not buy it at Marshall Field's for Fourteen Dollars, but here it is Only a Dollar.

And I took from my purse a Dollar, and she wrapped the Vase in the Part of an old Newspaper that hath Colored Pictures, and I bore it Home.

And my wife, Keturah, met me at the door, and she spake to me and said, Whence comest thou, my lord, and what dost thou bring?

And I said, I come from the White Elephant Sale, and I have brought to thee a Lovely Present.

And I set the Vase upon the Table, and removed the Covering, and Keturah looked upon the Vase, and her countenance fell; and then she laughed.

And I answered and said unto her, Wherefore dost thou laugh?

And she said, Safed, dost thou remember the Hopkins family that lived nigh unto us when we were First Married?

And I said, Yea, I remember them, to my sorrow.

And she said, Dost thou remember which of many evil things they did to us first?

And I spake to her of the time they borrowed the Lawn-mower, and how they Didn't Do a Thing to it save to Ruin it; and of the time their Spoiled Kid threw his Ball through the Window, and what his Fond Mother said to me when I rebuked him, and about their Chickens and their Clotheslines.

And she said, All these things they did, and many more; but the first of all the evil things they did to us was the Present they Wished on us at our Wedding. Dost thou remember what it was?

And my heart fell within me, and I answered, I think it was a Vase, but Very Unlike This One.

And she laughed again, till she wept. And she said, Safed, my lord, thou art a wise man, but no man is wise

enough to visit a White Elephant Sale save his Wife be with him. Twenty years hath that Horrid Vase been in our Attic, and I never had a chance to Get Rid of it till Yesterday, when I sent it to the White Elephant Sale. And now, behold, thou hast brought it back again.

And again she laughed.

But some women would have scolded.

THE FLOWER CATALOGUE

NOW the Storms of Winter blew Cold, and the Snow of Winter lay Deep, when the Postman brought a Catalogue of Flower Seeds and Bulbs. And Keturah opened it, and gazed therein with Great Admiration. And she said, Safed, my lord.

And I answered, Here Am I, Keturah.

And she said, Didst thou ever see Flowers so Beautiful as these in this Catalogue?

And I answered, Neither have I seen such nor hath any another man; such flowers are not in Nature, but in Art.

Nevertheless, said she, I like to look on them, and some of them will I buy.

And I said, Behold the house wherein we live is not our own, and it lately was a Place of Weeds, and there is a Row of Flats hard by.

But she said, We will make it More Attractive. Thou hast thy Hollyhocks; I will have Phlox and Chrysanthemums and Cockleshells and Silver Bells and Cowslips all in a Row.

So she wrote to the man whose Vivid Imagination had produced the Catalogue, and sent him Money, and he wrote that he would send the Plants in the Spring.

And it came to pass on a day that they came by Express. And I digged in the Ground with a Spade, and I set them out that they should grow. And the Roots were wondrous things wherewith to lay hold on the Earth and transform it into Beauty, so that the one kind of Root might make earth and water into Roses, and another into Lilies. And as I digged in the Earth I thought much of the Wonder of Life as God had placed it in the world.

And I said to her, Keturah, we might not have done this had not some Benefactor of the Human Race sent us a Seed Catalogue.

And she said, Told I not thee it would be well that we should do this?

And I answered, Whether we tarry here a year or ten years, still am I glad to have planted some Flowers. Yea, though we live not to enjoy them, yet will others be glad. Keturah, thou hast done well. And so did the man who sent the Catalogue.

And I called down from Heaven a Blessing upon all men, be they Ministers or Merchants, who suggest to men the good things they ought to do, and who make the doing of them Lovely.

For I myself am a distributor of Catalogues of Assorted Virtues, and I say to people, Behold how lovely is Goodness! Go to, even now in the Winter of thy Depravity, and break up the fallow ground of thy heart against the time when thou shalt plant goodness, and it shall Blossom in Beauty.

THE USES OF THE WHITE ELEPHANT

NOW after that I had returned from the White Elephant Sale, there were certain days wherein I feared Lest Keturah should speak to me concerning it, and I hoped that she would not. For there was not much that I could say; and while I love to hear her laugh, still her Laughter concerning the White Elephant Vase had been Immoderate, and I had heard Enough of it. But she spake no more of it, for she is a Wise Woman, and when she hath Laughed, she doth not Rub It In.

But I Looked about the House, where she had put it. And I found it not, neither in the Pantry nor in the Parlor; neither in the Attic nor in the Ashcan. And I said, She hath given it to the Salvation Army. But she cared too much for the Salvation Army to have done such a thing.

Now there was a day when the Apple Blossoms were out, and the Trees were Glorious with them. And Keturah made a Great Bouquet of them, and placed it on the Dinner Table, and it was a Mountain of Fragrant Beauty. And it came down on every side so that it

touched the Table. And I praised her, for she had done Excellently.

And She liked it that I praised her.

And on the Third Day she said, Behold, the Petals have fallen, and the Bouquet is no longer Beautiful. Wilt thou not carry it out, and Throw it Away?

And I did even as she asked me. And when I had thrown the stems away, I looked at the Vase in my hand, and it was even the White Elephant.

And I was minded to take it, and throw it into the Lake. But she Restrained me.

And she said unto me, Even though the Vessel be unlovely, yet doth it Hold Water, yea and Hold flowers; and I can drape the Flowers that they Cover the Vase, that only the Beauty shall Appear.

And I said, Oh, Keturah, thou art a wonder; but why not cast it away, and buy a Vase that is Beautiful?

And she said, My lord, I have decided to keep it that it may be to us a Parable. For everyone hath his White Elephant, and life bringeth to all men and women much of which they fain would be rid, yet which the Providence of God permitteth them not to cast wholly out of their lives. And when they find that it is so, lo, there is a way, if they seek for it, whereby they may Make the Best of it. Even so have I resolved to do with my White Elephants.

And I meditated long. And I spake, saying, Keturah. And she smiled and said, Say on, my lord.

And I asked her, Am I one of thy White Elephants?

And she smiled yet more, and she said, Whether thou art or not, no Mark Down Sale shall have thee.

THE PLANT I DID NOT BUY

NOW while I was setting out the Roots which Keturah had bought from the man who made the Seed Catalogue, I found one Root that Stuck up out of the Ground, and I laid hold upon it, and I said, Here is a Root that Beareth no Label. I wonder what it is? Behold, I know not, yet will I plant it, and see what Cometh up.

And Keturah answered and said, Knowest thou not what that is? It is a Dandelion which thou didst Dig up in making the Holes for the Flowers.

And I was ashamed that I had not known it before. Nevertheless, I saw what it was, even while she was telling me. For I am not wholly an Ignorant man, albeit for the moment I knew not the root, what it was.

And I held the Dandelion root in my hand. And I looked at it, and beheld how Deep it had sunk into the Earth, and how firmly it had laid hold on the Soil with its one long Root, and I admired the way it had planned to Stay Put.

And I looked at the top, and though it seemed to have no life, yet there were Leaves Curled up and ready to push themselves forth, yea, and a Bud that was all but

ready to lift its head above the ground as soon as the winter was past.

And I said to the Dandelion, Behold thou art a Plucky Plant. Thou sinkest thy Root to a Great Depth. Thou sendest up thy Hollow Stalk in the form of Construction the Strongest known to any Engineer. Thy White Ball of soft Down is the most Beautiful and Delicate thing in Nature; yea, and even thy Yellow Blossom is Marvelous, for every little yellow leaf is a flower. Moreover, it is not thy fault that men call thee a Weed. If it were only Hard to make thee Grow, men would pay Good Money for thy Roots, and break their Backs setting thee out, and declare that a sight of thee, sprinkling thy gold over a green Lawn, was the Perfection of Gardening. Neither didst thou sin nor thy parent flowers, yet are thou Despised and Rejected, and men Love thee Not.

And when I thought of these things, I could not find it in my heart to cut off a life so wonderful and so plucky; neither did I want it in my garden. But I took it down to the Alley that runneth behind my house, and I planted it there. And I said, Now the Lord judge whether it be not better thou shouldst grow there than that the ground be cumbered by a Tin Can.

Yet I looked around and hastened back to the House lest my Neighbors should know that I had planted a Dandelion.

And who knoweth whether I did right or wrong?

For if some great Blight should come upon the Dandelions in the Front Lawns of all men, then would they

come and seek in my Alley, and beg a seed of my Dandelion.

For though I be chided for giving the Dandelion a Fighting Chance for its life, yet have I known men whose lives were as Weeds whom God Spared in His Mercy, and they Bloomed in Wonderful and Unexpected Goodness.

HOW I OBTAINED THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE

NOW in the days of my youth there was a Wise Man, who had lived to a Great Age; and he had a Stone called the Philosopher's Stone, wherein he looked and Saw Strange Things, and Understood Great Mysteries. And all men Wondered what he would do with the Stone when he Died. And it came to pass that he sent out Messengers to all the Prophets and Sages and Soothsayers, and said unto them :

Behold, I go the way of all flesh; and before I go I shall give this Stone to the man who is to Follow after me. Come ye, then, all who are wise, and let me discover which of you is Worthy, that he may Inherit this Stone.

And most of those who were Reputed Wise began to make Excuse, for they Feared to Come, lest he should Lay Bare their Folly; and they sent him Messages saying that they had Previous Engagements, but hoped that he would send them the Stone by Parcels Post, and they would pay the Freight.

But there were seven men who went, from seven cities; and they came before him. And he sat in his Chair, and

he had a long white beard, and he commanded the seven wise men to stand before him.

And thus he spake to them—

This Stone, which was brought to earth by a Meteor, and found by a man who was a Seventh Son of a Seventh Son, I shall give to the man among you who Returneth the Right Answer to the Question which I shall ask. Are you ready for the Question?

And certain of the Wise Men Answered and said to him, We are ready. Ask us whatsoever Question thou wilt. Ask it in the Firmament or in the Earth; in the Land or in the Sea; in Things Movable or Things Immovable; lo, we are Ready.

Then, said he, I will ask you this Question: What is the Best Way for a Man to help a Woman over a Fence?

And they were all Dumb for a season, for truly he had put them up against a Hard One.

Then answered the first of the Wise Men, and said, He should stand with her upon the nearer side, and with his right hand under her left elbow should gently lift her the while she climbeth.

And the second answered, and said, He should kneel upon one knee, and let her step in his hand, as if she were to mount an Horse.

And the third said, He should himself climb over first, and offer her his hand, while she Gracefully Steppeth down on the Farther Side.

And the fourth said, He should indeed climb over first, and she should climb to the Top, and when she Sitteth There upon the Top of the Fence, he should put up both

hands, not permitting her to climb down, but should cause her to Leap Boldly and Gracefully into his Arms.

And the fifth said, He should assail the Fence, and carry it away as Samson did the Gates of Gaza, so should he make an highway for her to pass through.

And the sixth said, The way for a Man to help a Woman over a Fence is to Walk with her till they find a Gate, and open the Gate and walk through with her; and the Lovelier the Lady, the farther should it be to the Gate.

Now when they had all spoken, they waited for the Ancient Man to award the Stone. And he said, Have ye all spoken?

And they answered and said, We have spoken.

And they had forgotten me, for I was the youngest of them all. But the Ancient Man had seen me. And he beckoned with the hand, and I drew near and he said to me:

Young man, what sayest thou? With Which of these Six Men dost thou Agree?

And I answered, With none of them.

Then said he, Speak thou, and tell us what is the Best Way for a Man to help a Woman over a Fence?

And I answered and said, The Best Way for a Man to help a Woman over a Fence is for him to cross over, and go on a little space about his Business, yet not too far; and let her Climb over Any Old Way that Pleaseth her.

Then were they all silent.

And he gave the Stone to me.

THE USE OF THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE

NOW, when the Ancient Man had given me the Stone, the Six other men who had come for it rose and went their way. And some spake Courteously to the Ancient man in Farewell, but certain of them said one to another that they did not believe the Stone was good for Anything Anyway, and that the Old Fellow was a Fake. For so are men accustomed to speak when they are Disappointed. And they all Looked at me with Little Love, and I knew that in gaining the Stone I had lost Six Friends.

Now after they had Gone, I sat at the feet of the Ancient Man for the space of an Whole Hour by the Clock above his head, and neither of us Spake. And I grew Weary of the Silence. Then I said,

This Thing is Getting on my Nerve. I have Waited, as became a Younger Man, but it is time for Somebody to Wake Up and Get Busy and Say Something.

And he said, Young Man, thou hast Spoken Wisely, even if thou hast Spoken Unwisely.

And I understood him not. Then he said,

Silence is a Good Thing up to a Certain Limit, but there comes a Time when Somebody Ought to Say Something; and it were better to Speak Unwisely and let a Wiser Man Rebuke thee than to Continue sitting and saying nothing. Thou didst grow Weary of the Silence, and so did I.

Then I asked him, Why then didst thou not Speak?

And he answered, It would have been bad for my Reputation if I had seemed less Patient than thou. And now that thou hast spoken, what is it thou Desirest to Say?

Then said I, O great and mighty Seer, whose fame is abroad in the land, because from thy lips drop Words of Wisdom, and from thy pen Treasured Thoughts, which the Newspapers print, two things have I been wanting to hear thee say. And the first of them is this, What are the uses of the Philosopher's Stone which thou hast given me? May I, indeed, look therein and know the Hearts of men and the Will of God?

And he answered, Nay, my son. But I will tell thee into what Stone thou shalt Look, that thou mayest know the Hearts of Other Men and thereby also shalt thou know the Will of God. When men come to thee seeking wisdom, and lamenting their Mistakes and Sins, look not into this Stone, for it can teach thee Nothing. Look thou into thine Own Heart. And see thou give no Message to other men till thou hast Spoken it to thine Own Heart, and thine Heart has said, Amen. For in nothing canst thou be a safe Guide to others, save as thou dost make the Truth real to Thyself.

And I sat in silence, for I knew he had spoken Wisely. And to what he said my heart said, Amen.

And he said to me, Thine own Heart, my son, that and that only, is the true Philosopher's Stone.

And I considered much what he was saying.

Then said I to him, But this Stone in mine Hand, is it only a Fraud, and Useless?

And he said unto me, Nay, my son, it hath three uses. The first is that of its Reputation. The Hearts of men are Hard, and their Minds are Stupid, and they need Tangible Symbols. Many there be who are unable to trust the judgment of their Fellow Man, whose Brain and Soul they think are like unto their Own, but who bow down in Reverence before a Stone with a Pretty Story concerning it. Let them look at the Stone, while thou dost look into thine own Heart, and theirs.

And I said, Tell me the second use of the stone.

And he said, It is to lie upon thy Desk, and keep thy Papers from blowing away in the Wind.

And I said, I hear and understand. Tell me now the third use of the Stone.

And he said, My son, the ear of man is dull, and thy voice can reach only a few of them. What thou hast to say to men, speak in their ears. But see thou stop not with the Utterance, lest only a few hear thee, and they Forget. What thou speakest, Speak, but Write it also. Behold I will show thee the Greatest Use of the Philosopher's Stone.

And he took from his Pouch a Pencil and a Knife, And he took the Stone from my hand, and he Spat thereon,

and he sharpened the knife therewith, and with the sharpened Knife he Sharpened his Pencil.

And I saw and understood.

Thus did I learn the uses of the Philosopher's Stone.

And he said, My son, did I not hear thee say there were Two Things thou didst Consider while we sat in Silence, and wished to Hear me Say?

And I answered, Yea, sire. And one of them was to Tell me the Uses of the Philosopher's Stone, and thou hast told me. And the second I greatly Long to Hear thee Say, but I am Abashed to Mention it.

And he said, I will save thee thine Embarrassment, for I can read thy Mind, for Concerning it I have Inside Information, and I know what thou didst hope I would say, My son, let us go out to Lunch.

And I marveled at his Wisdom, for he had read my Mind.

THE HOLLYHOCK AND THE DANDELION

NOW before I had moved the Roots of the Hollyhocks, I had gathered the Seed that grew thereon. And when the Spring had come, and the Hollyhocks were springing up from the Roots, Keturah said to me, Safed.

And I answered, Here am I .

And she said, Let us take this Hollyhock Seed and plant it along the Back Fence, hard by the Alley ; and if there be enough of the Seed we may even plant some of it within the **Alley**.

And the saying pleased me. And I sought in the Basement and I found a Spade, and an Hoe, and a Rake. And Keturah sought, and she found a Trowel.

And as we digged, we came to the place where I had planted the Dandelion. And she said, Behold, here is ground that hath been digged already ; and lo, here is something **planted** therein.

And she Prodded with her Trowel, and she discovered the Dandelion.

And I turned my back, and digged elsewhere.

And she said, Safed, look on me.

And I looked on her, and she was good to look upon; yet as she stood there, with her Trowel in her Right Hand, and the Root of the Dandelion in her Left, I stood in Awe of her. For she was like a Winged Victory, albeit she had a Head, which the Winged Victory hath not.

And she said, Safed, didst thou plant this Dandelion?

And I said, The Dandelion hath a right to its life, and it is only because it is common men think it a Weed.

And she said, Thou speakest like a Phool Philosopher. Knowest thou not that the labor thou didst waste in planting one Dandelion would have sown the seeds of Ten Hollyhocks? Thou mindest me of much of the Sloppy Sentimentality which foolish people put into Books on Philanthropy. And thou showest me how necessary it is that the Truly Wise should superintend the activities of the Merely Good.

And I said, Keturah.

But she listened not, and she said, In a world where there is not room enough for all the things that would grow, it is necessary to choose what form of Life and Goodness we shall Cultivate. The world is nigh clean gone to the bad because people are content to cultivate habits for which they can frame some Cheap Sentimental Apology, while the seeds of Greater Goodness go unplanted, because there is no Room.

And I listened to her, for she spake words of wisdom.

And she flung the Dandelion Root far down the Alley, albeit she flung it not in the Direction she intended. And she said to me, Now, for thy Folly, dig thou up that spot of ground yonder wherein there grow Twenty Dande-

lions, and plant thou there this seed of the Glorious Hollyhock. For he who groweth a Dandelion in the garden of his life and habit, when he might be growing an Hollyhock, to him it is sin.

And I did even as Keturah said unto me.

And if any man thinketh that I did wrong, he may come into my Alley, and seek till he findeth the root of the Dandelion, and do with it what seemeth to him good. Yea, and he may have more Dandelions if he wanteth them.

But let him not plant them where Keturah reigneth.

THE CHICKENS AND THE MUSH

NOW Keturah considered the High Cost of Living, and she said, Let us buy an Incubator, and keep Hens. So she sold her Waste Paper to the Rag Man, and she bought an incubator, and put Eggs therein, and in thrice seven days the Eggs Hatched, and there came forth Little Chickens. And Keturah fed them.

And it came to pass on a day that I went into the Yard, and beheld Keturah feeding the Chickens. And that whereon she fed them was Mush.

And she took the Mush from a Bowl with a Spoon, and she dropped a great Spoonful on the Ground. And all the Little Chickens ran every one of them after the Mush.

And she walked on a little farther and dropped another Spoonful. And all the little chickens forsook the first Spoonful and ran after the second. Yea, they trod every one of them upon the Mush which they had been eating that they might Hasten after other Mush.

And she went on a little farther and dropped a third Spoonful. And all the little chickens forsook the second Spoonful and ran after the third. And the Mush of the first Spoonful and of the second Spoonful they despised.

And some of the chickens got none of any of the three Spoonfuls. But if part of them had gone to each Spoonful they might all have had Mush. Nevertheless, did they all follow Keturah all around the Lot, and every chicken was Among Those Present when the last Spoonful was dropped.

And I meditated much thereon. And I said, Keturah. And she said, Here am I, my lord.

And I said, Men are like Chickens.

And Keturah said, What about women?

And I said, No matter how good is the food they already have, yet do they forsake it and run where the last Fad droppeth. And what they obtain after all their running is but Mush.

And I spake again, and I said, Keturah, men are like unto young chickens.

And Keturah said, So are women.

THE PINS

NOW it was the Sabbath Day, and I rose and washed myself and attired myself in Clean Raiment, and went to the House of God. And it came to pass that I sought in the Middle Drawer and I found therein a Clean Shirt which had been sent home from the Laundry. And the bosom thereof shone like polished Alabaster; and the Starch therein was so stiff that one might scarcely open the Buttonholes without a Screwdriver.

And before I could put it on I pulled out Sundry Pins which the Laundry had placed therein, and there were many Pins in the Shirt.

And After I had pulled out Pins enough to hold the Solar System in place, I put on the Shirt.

But I had overlooked One Pin.

And I went to the Synagogue, and I sat down; and I found that there remained a Pin in the Garment from which I had withdrawn so many Pins.

And I changed my Position so that the Pin no longer hurt me, and I forgot about it for a season. But when we had risen up to Praise the Lord in Song, and had sat down again, behold the Pin hurt me again, and in quite

another portion of mine Anatomy. And later I found it still Elsewhere.

And when I had returned to my house I removed my Garments and I sought for the Pin and found it, and removed it; and it hurt me no more.

And I said to my soul,

Take not overmuch Comfort in the faults thou hast removed; neither be thou self-righteous. Behold, while one Pin remaineth in thy Shirt, did it not hurt thee in Twenty Places? Even so is one fault which thou removest not. Therefore let no man cherish pride until he be perfect; and if the time come when he count himself perfect, lo, this belief is the one remaining Pin. Yea, and it is long like a Hatpin, and jabbeth both himself and his fellowmen. Wherefore beware of self-righteousness; and see thou forget not to remove the Pins that remain.

And I considered well these things.

THE TIME TABLE

NOW it came to pass in one of my journeys that I rode in a Locomotive; and just before the train Pulled Out the Conductor came beside the Cab and handed the Engineer a New Time Table, and the Conductor Spake unto the Engineer, saying:

“She goes into effect to-day, Bill. Burn up the old one.”

And the Engineer took down the Old Time Table and cast it into the Burning, Fiery Furnace, and it was totally consumed.

And I spake unto him, saying:

What do ye, burning up the Old Time Table?

And he showed me the new one, on the face whereof was printed in letters of great size:

DESTROY ALL PREVIOUS TIME TABLES.

And I said unto him:

But consider how useful hath been the Old Time Table. It hath brought thee and thy train safely on time for six months, and never wast thou at fault so long as thou didst guide thy train according thereto. And behold it differ-

eth but little from the new one. Wherefore shouldst thou cast it into the Burning, Fiery Furnace?

And he said:

The less it differeth the more certainly I must burn it. If the differences were great I might Remember them, but being so small, and with the Habit that is upon me, I should certainly forget, and my train would go Sky-hooting through the Rear end of some other Train, and the Passengers thereof would go to Heaven ahead of Schedule Time. Wherefore must every Old Time Table be utterly destroyed.

And I opened the Bible, and I read therein how Hezekiah brake in pieces the Brazen Serpent that Moses had made, and called it Nehushan, though many sang in his day,

It was good enough for Moses

And it's good enough for me.

And the Engineer rang the Bell and blew the Whistle, and the Train sped away along the Track, and as the Journey proceeded I thought much of these things.

THE UNEXPECTED HOLLYHOCKS

NOW the Spring came, so that the Birds were singing nigh unto my habitation, and I went often into my Garden, and sought for the Hollyhocks which I had planted.

And there came forth from the ground Small Green Leaves in a Cluster where I had planted the root of the Three Hollyhocks which the Municipal Mower spared, and I rejoiced. And I sought where I had planted the One Hollyhock which the Mower had cut down, and for many days it came not up, so that I sorrowed. And I said, Lord, I loved that one more than any of the rest; I pray Thee let that one also spring forth from the earth.

And after certain days that also came up, and it grew, albeit not so Vigorously; and I tended it, and watched it; for I was not minded that it should Perish, but that it should blossom and bear Seed.

And after these things, I sought along the Fence where I had planted the Other Hollyhocks, ere they digged the Great Pit for the Building of Some Flats. And a few of them I found, but others I found not; for the place had been Bleak, and the Soil not so good, and some of the

Roots were Bruised by the Stones, and cut by the Spade, when I hastened because the Mosquitoes were Something Fierce, and there was no place where they Bit me Not. And I mourned that I had not gotten a few more Mosquito Bites, while I was about it, rather than that I should have Wrought Hastily. Nevertheless, let no man judge me till he hath sought to dig Hollyhocks out of a Stonepile, on a Warm, Moist Day nigh about the time of the Going Down of the Sun, when the Mosquitos rise out of the Wet Weeds and Settle upon him as a Cloud.

But in the places where the Hollyhocks sprang not from the Roots, there sprang up Very Little Hollyhocks in great number. For I had sought to carry as much Earth as I might with the Roots, and in the Earth I carried were the Seeds of the Hollyhocks that had died.

And when I saw them I rejoiced, and I said, Oh, my God, Thou destroyest the hopes of man, even as spake thy servant Job. Yet thou art not a God that delightest in destruction. I thank Thee for the Unexpected Hollyhocks, which are more in number than the Hollyhocks that are dead.

And I sorrowed no more for the Mosquito bites.

But at the time they were grievous; yea, they were Something Fierce.

THE WIDOWER WHO WOULD MARRY AGAIN

NOW, there came to me a man who said, Look into the Philosopher's Stone and tell me whom I should Marry.

And I seated him opposite my window, and I sat in the shadow, and I took the Philosopher's Stone in mine hand, and I asked him, Hast thou been married before?

And he said, Yea, I lived seventeen years with my wife, and she hath gone to Heaven, and I am lonely, therefore would I marry again.

And I asked him, Was thy first wife a Member of the Church?

And he answered, Yea, she was a devout woman. I also am a Member of the Church. But I have thought that as Variety addeth something to Life, this time I would seek a wife a Little Bit More Gay.

And I looked into the Philosopher's Stone, and into his face, and I knew that There is No Fool Like an Old Fool.

And I said unto him, Hast thou found this Gay Lady?

And he said, There is a Girl, and believe me, she is Some Girl. I met her thrice at Bridge, and Four times

at Tango. She, I think, would add to my life a Little Element of Variety.

And I said to him, Thus far thy Guess is a Good One. She will do that, and Then Some.

And I said to him, Hath the Church of which thou art a member a Woman's Society?

And he answered, Yea; but its members are not quite the Speed of the Girl of whom I told thee.

And I said to him, On Friday when the Woman's Society of thine own Church doth meet, and the women Sew for the Heathen, and spread forth a Box Lunch at Noon, go thou there. Ask all the Widows and the Maidens to stand up in a row with their faces to the wall. Then let an Elderly Matron blindfold thee, and take thou an Handkerchief and fling it at the Row, and the woman whom thou hittest, marry her, and let her be thy wife.

And he asked, Is that the way to choose a wife?

And I answered him, Not for a wise man. But for an Old Fool, who, having had a Good Christian Wife, goeth to seek her Successor among the seekers of Pleasure, even to such an one as thyself, the way I tell thee is the way of wisdom.

And he looked at the Philosopher's Stone, and wondered if I had learned it there.

It was none of his Business where I learned It.

OF TRUTH IN UNEXPECTED PLACES

NOW after I had obtained the Philosopher's Stone came divers of my Friends who, up to that time, had shown little interest in me, and some of them became Quite Friendly. And they sat in my Study Carelessly Handling the Philosopher's Stone. And I seemed not to be watching them, but I watched. For some of them would have Slipped it into their Pockets absentmindedly.

Now among the rest was a Neighbor, whose Garden joined hard to mine, and whose chickens were more at home in my Garden than in his. And he asked me to loan him the Philosopher's Stone that he might add to its Virtue. For, said he, It should be rubbed with the Fur of a Black Cat in the Dark of the Moon. And he had a Black Cat, as I knew to my sorrow.

But I would not loan him the Stone, for I knew it was in his heart to keep it, and return to me another Stone like unto it in Appearance but not in Virtue. So I said to him that the Stone Suited Me as it then was; and as for the rubbing of it with the Fur of a Black Cat in the Dark of the Moon, I had no faith in that, being only a Superstition.

But it came to pass on a night that his Black Cat walked on the Fence between the two Gardens and continually did Yowl. And this had he done often aforetime, so that it drove sleep from my eyes and slumber from my eyelids.

And I awoke out of my sleep, and the Black Cat yowled yet again, and then some.

And I stretched forth my hand, and I laid hold on the Philosopher's Stone, and I cast it even as David ben Jesse cast a smooth stone at Goliath of Gath.

And the Black Cat yowled no more.

And I laid me down and slept again, and counted what I had done to have been among my Good Deeds.

And I arose very early in the morning, and I walked in my Garden, and I found the Philosopher's Stone on my own side of the Fence, and the Black Cat lay on the other side. And it was just as it should have been. And I picked up the Stone and brought it back to my Table. But the Cat I left for my Neighbor to pick up; for I believe in an Equitable Division. I want no more than my share.

Now my Neighbor often speaketh to me of his sorrow that I did not lend him the Stone before the night when his Black Cat died. But I have no sorrow. Yea, I know in my heart that the Stone hath now this added virtue whereof he spake to me.

For I have discovered that there is some truth even in untruthful superstitions. And I regard the Stone as possessing more virtue since the night when I rubbed it against the fur of the Black Cat in the Dark of the Moon.

NATURE-FAKING HOLLYHOCKS

NOW the Little Unexpected Hollyhocks that had grown where the roots of the older Hollyhocks died, grew slowly at the first, but afterward they grew mightily. And I drave Stakes about them. And when there came to me a man of Italy, or a Parthian, or Mede, or a Dweller in Mesopotamia, and besought me that I would give him an Hour's Work, because that he had no money to buy him a Drink, I gave him work, but I charged him straightly, See thou dig nothing inside those Stakes.

Now, Keturah beheld the Stakes that I had Driven, and she came to behold what was inside them. And I said to her, Keturah, behold my young Hollyhocks.

And she said unto me, My lord, art thou sure that these are Hollyhocks?

And I answered, Of a surety they are Hollyhocks. They have grown out of the soil that I brought with the Hollyhock roots that died. These are the Hollyhocks which the Lord hath given me in the place of those that are no more.

And she answered nothing .

And when Keturah is silent, I can never be sure that she is not thinking.

Now, in the fulness of time there came a mighty rain. And it rained three days and three nights. And the weather was warm.

And while the ground was still wet, I went out to see my Hollyhocks that had grown where the roots of the old Hollyhocks had died. And behold, they were Burdocks, and Mustard.

And Keturah lifted up her voice and said, What aileth thee, Safed?

And I said, I am wroth because the Hollyhocks that I spared are Burdocks.

And again she said nothing.

And I read in the Word of God wherein the prophet spake of the Sorrows of God, that He had planted a Vineyard in a very Fruitful Hill, and looked that it should bear Grapes, and it brought forth Wild Grapes. And I cried out, What more could I have done for my Young Hollyhocks that I have not done for them? Wherefore are they Burdocks?

And I said, Keturah.

And she said, Here am I, my lord.

And I said, Didst thou know all the time that those were not Hollyhocks?

And she answered, Yea, my lord; I knew.

And I said, Wherefore didst thou not tell me?

And she answered, That knowledge is most valuable that we Learn of Ourselves, and which Costeth us Something.

And I Pulled up the Burdocks, yea, and the Too Much Mustard, and I hanged them on the fence, high as Haman.

And Keturah said, Safed, my lord.

And I answered her, Say on.

And she said, See thou pull carefully. For Burdocks and Mustard when they are small look much like Hollyhocks; peradventure there shall be among these Weeds an Hollyhock.

And I found it even so. Among them all were a score of Burdocks and two score of Mustard, but there was one Hollyhock. And I spared it, and I said, If this one shall thrive and bloom, I shall see of the travail of my soul, and shall be satisfied.

THE WEEDS IN MY GARDEN

NOW, after I had planted my Garden, there were certain mornings when I rose early and took my Hoe, and went out, and Watched Things Grow. And my soul was Enlarged.

But as it grew later in the Spring there came nights when I had been out, and the Morning Came Too Soon, and I went not into my Garden. And when I went after a Week or Two, behold the Weeds had grown Faster than my Plants.

And I toiled with my Hoe till I blistered my Hand, yet gained I but little. And Everything seemed to Happen to my Plants, and nothing to harm the Weeds.

And one day I returned from my Garden, and I was weary. And I ate my bread in the sweat of my face.

And I said, O Keturah, I am a Punk Gardener.

And Keturah answered, It would not be becoming in me to Dispute my lord.

And I said, Behold, my fathers before me were Punk Gardeners. My first Ancestor was a Gardener, and he could not Hold Down his Job.

And Keturah answered, Let not my lord be Discouraged overmuch. That Ancestor of thine Got some Good Things out of his Garden; surely thou canst do as well as he.

And I answered, Yea, he got some good things out of that Garden, the one of which was Experience; and that is a fruit that hath its bitter and its sweet, but is Profitable.

And Keturah answered, My lord hath spoken wisely. Likewise did Adam get a vision of the Eternal Mystery of Life, and beheld the wonder of Nature, that seed cast into the ground cometh forth in marvelous forms of beauty. Oh, my lord, is not that worth a blistered hand?

And I answered, O thou wise woman, daughter of the Sun and Moon, thou speakest wisely and well; for Adam learned how to be a worker together with God.

Then were we silent for a season, for we thought of many strange and wondrous things that we had seen in our Garden.

And I said, Keturah.

And she said, Speak on, my lord.

And I said, Adam got one other good thing out of his Garden.

And she said, What was that, my lord?

And I said, It was the most Enjoyable, yet the most Troublesome. He was hard put to it to live With it, and he found he could not live Without it.

And she said, Thou speakest in riddles, Surely my lord doth not mean the serpent?

And this she said, but she knew what I meant.

And I spake thus, The fairest flower that bloomed in Eden was no other than Eve. For all the trouble she made, she was a blessing to Adam.

And Keturah said nothing, and I made as if I had nothing more to say; but she knew I would say more. Therefore was she silent.

And I said, Keturah, I have a choice blossom from that same vine. Neither I nor Adam have failed wholly in the care of our Gardens.

LIFE IN SPIDERTOWN

NOW I rose very early in the morning, before the sun had risen, and the Dews of the Night were yet upon the Earth. And I walked in my garden, and behold, the Web of a Spider. And I stood and looked thereon. And the Web of the Spider was half a cubit long, and half a cubit broad. And the spider had builded it close to the ground. And it shone white in the early morning. And nigh unto it was another Web like unto it, and nigh unto the second a third. Yea, I looked about me, and all about in my Garden were there webs of spiders, all of them white in the mist, on every hill of potatoes a spider web, and each a Silken Tent. And I lifted one of them with my staff, and looked at it Closely, and behold, nothing that I had ever seen was half so delicate. And the little drops of Dew upon it were like unto Pearls.

And I thought as I looked around me how here, within the space of my Garden, were Ten Thousand homes of Spiders, in each one of which dwelt a Spider and his Wife, and in some of them certain Little Spiders. And in my neighbor's Garden another Ten Thousand, even a City or a Nation in each Garden. And I wondered by

what Name my Garden was called in the Language of Spiders. For I remembered that to them this was not the Garden of a Man, but a Kingdom of the Spiders, and that they doubtless believed that for them God created the garden, yea, and the Earth, and the Sun and the Stars.

And I wondered what they thought of Me, and of my Walking abroad among their Tents, and lifting one of them to its Destruction with my Staff, and Rending many others with my Foot. And I wondered whether they thought me Good or Bad, and whether they called me God or the Devil.

Yea, I thought of all the Theologies of Man, and I said, Are they not the Intellectual Spider Webs of those who live close to the Ground, and whose filmy tents endure but for a Night?

And I remembered the word of a Wise man, who said, Go to the Ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways and be wise. And I said, Go to the Spider, thou Theologian; consider her ways, and be humble.

There is nothing that the hand of man hath made that is half so wonderful as the Web of the Spider. And there is nothing that Man createth that can endure much longer than a Spider web. For a Day and a Thousand Years are alike to the God who made both Man and the Spider.

And I thought of all these things, yea, and of many more. And I picked my way among the Spider Webs, and was careful not to walk upon them. For how can I tell whether the same God that made both me and the Spider loveth not the Spider as much as He loveth me?

And this, I said to myself, that whatever the Spiders think about God and Me and my Neighbor, and by whatever names they call our Respective Potato Patches, whether in the Language of Spiders they call mine Germania and my neighbor's Britannia, or my neighbor's Austria and mine Italia, I hope they live in peace, each in its own Potato Patch which they think to be a nation, and that they are far more wise and not so sinful and stupid as men.

For whether theologies be true or false, it is better to love than hate.

This truth was revealed to me anew when I considered the Spider.

THE HOLLYHOCK SEEDS

NOW there came to me an Handmaiden of the Lord, even one of the mothers of Israel, and thus she said unto me, Art thou Safed?

And I answered, After this name am I called, but what man knoweth his own Name till God shall give him a new name at the Resurrection of the Just?

And she said, Why do men call thee the Sage?

And I answered, In the City of the Blind there was found a man with one eye, and him they made king.

And she said, Didst thou have pity on the Hollyhocks that grew by the concrete walk, and save them from the Weeds?

And I answered, As the Merciful God hath dealt with my soul, so have I striven to do with the Hollyhocks.

And she said, Thou are indeed a wise man, and a good. Now, behold, I also love Hollyhocks, and for many years have I nourished them in my Garden. Yea, and I have much seed that I have saved. There are White Hollyhocks that are like the Snow; and Red Hollyhocks that are like the Dawn; and Yellow Hollyhocks that are like Gold; and Pink Hollyhocks that are like the cheeks of

Keturah when God first gave her to thee; and Single Hollyhocks and Double Hollyhocks, and about Fifty-Seven Varieties. And I have saved twice as many of them as I could plant. And the Half thereof are for thee.

Now when I heard this my heart was glad; and I made broad the place for the planting thereof. Yea, and whoever sendeth me precious seed of the Hollyhock, for it will I make room.

And I thanked this mother in Israel, and I prayed to my God on her behalf that she may still bring forth Blossoms higher and higher on the stalk of her long and beautiful life, till the topmost flower of all may Blossom in the Garden of God.

And, as I planted the seed she gave to me, I prayed this prayer to God for her.

THE OTHER GOOD TURN

NOW there was a day when I had need of Exercise, and my Garden had need of Hoeing; wherefore I said to my Soul that I would Hoe in my Garden. But while I was yet coming, behold a man stood at my door and he rang the Bell. And the Damsel opened the door, and he stood without, and called for me. And I went to the door, and he spake thus:

Behold, I have lived in this town for Twenty Years, and I am an upright man, and have many virtues. Yet the Lord hath dealt very sore with me. For I have no Money and I have no work.

And I asked him, What canst thou do?

And he answered, Anything.

And I had heard that answer before, and knew that it meant that he could do Nothing well.

And I said to him, I have no work for thee, save to Hoe in my Garden. If thou wilt work there until Noon, and dig out the Weeds, I will give thee a Dollar.

And he took the hoe that was in my hand, and he went to what he called Work.

And from then until Noon he was in my Garden, and he trod on my Watermelon vines, and he dug up my Radishes, and he injured my Peas and Beans. And the Weeds he hurt not perceptibly. And 'ere the Clock struck Twelve he stood on my threshold, asking for his Dollar. And I gave it to him, albeit he had not earned it, and he went his way.

Now a year and a day thereafter he came again. And I knew him not. And he said,

Dost thou not know me? I am the man who a year ago did come to thee in thy great Need, and did Hoe for thee, and make thy Garden beautiful. Yea, and I never saw a Garden as weedy as thine until I made it Lovely. And now behold, one good turn deserveth another. I am in Temporary Financial Embarrassment, and I have come to thee assured in my heart that for the Good I did thee then, thou wilt now lend to me a Ten Dollar Bill till the day after tomorrow.

And I bowed before him in admiration of his Assurance. And I said,

I cannot afford to lend thee Ten Dollars.

And he asked:

Hast thou any doubt about the return of it?

And I answered him, Nay. For I had no doubt at all. I knew in my heart that if I loaned him Ten I should never see the money again.

And he asked,

Why then dost thou not loan it to me?

And I answered,

If having given the one dollar which thou didst not earn places me under obligation now to give thee Ten, how much should I owe thee a year and a day hence? Verily thou wouldst then expect of me an Hundred.

And he was wroth, and went his way reviling me.

But I think he is of a Forgiving spirit; and some day he will come again and seek to Accommodate me by having me assist him.

For I have known many like unto him.

And I marvel when I think how many men there be who could count the benefits they have received for benefits bestowed. Yea, I verily think there are men who imagine that God is under great obligation to them for the Privilege they have Vouchsafed to Him of forgiving them their sins, and saving their Dirty Little Souls.

THE BATH TUB AT THE INN

NOW, it came to pass as I journeyed that I lighted on a certain place where there was an Inn, and I entered and Lodged there. And in the Inn was a Bath Tub, and but one; and every Saturday night each Guest did bathe himself or herself therein. And I beheld them as they Furtively Hastened through the halls, clad in Bath-robos or in something less, and they were not Naked, yet did they hasten as if ashamed.

And in time it came about that I Obtained Entrance into the Bath Room, just as Another Man was Leaving it. And he wore a Ragged Bathrobe, and a Smile that said, Behold, I am clean.

And I entered, and the Water still was Running from the Tub, and Gurgling as it ran.

And I looked within the Tub, and behold, there was on the inside of it a Ridge, which marked the Level of the Water at the time the last Occupant had been within. And I liked it not.

Then I communed with my soul, and my soul said to me, Doest thou well to be Wroth with the man who last Bathed? Behold the Ridge around the tub. Is it not

evidence that he hath had a bath? Yea, doth it not show that he Needed one? Yea, furthermore, doth it not prove that the bath hath Wrought Well for him, and that by the Measure of whatever thou seest on the Sides of the Tub, and what hath run down the pipe, the man is Cleaner than when he entered? Lovest thou not truth, and the evidence thereof? And is not Cleanliness a Virtue wherein thou shouldst Rejoice?

And I said, Yea, I rejoice in the Truth, but the Evidence giveth me no Pleasure; and I Love Virtue, and Cleanliness is a virtue, yet I would that he had given me other proof of his Cleanliness, or given me none at all.

Then I considered within myself, and I meditated thus: Behold, there are many men who practice their virtues in such form that they make virtue unlovely. Yea, there be those who serve the Lord as if the devil were in them.

THE LARGE PEARL RING

NOW I traveled upon a Railway Train, and Keturah went with me. And the Train ended one stage of our Journey, and we waited for another, and we Hungered. And we entered a Restaurant, which is being interpreted a Khan, which joined hard unto the Station. And a Damsel brought us Food, and we ate thereof, and I left a Tip beside my Plate for the Damsel. And she gave me a Check whereon was written, Pay the Cashier. And as we went out I paid the Cashier.

Now the Cashier sat upon a Throne, with an Iron Cage about her and the Cash, and I poked the money through a little Window. And she took the money with her right hand, and she pushed out my Change with her left hand. And she did it quickly, for she had learned well to make change rapidly ere the Trains went. And the left hand had on its little finger Three Pearls, or what were intended to Look Like Pearls. And the size of each of the Pearls or Near-Pearls was not so great as the size of a Frosted Sixteen Candle Power Incandescent Light. And I looked at her hand that bore the Ring, and her hand was Soiled. And I saw that her hand was soiled, and Keturah, she saw it Before I Did.

And I spake to Keturah, and I said, Did'st thou behold the Ring with the Pearls? Believe me, That was Some Ring.

And Keturah said, Yea, I saw it.

And I said, Did'st thou notice that the hand was not clean?

And Keturah said, Yea, I noticed that. It is not an easy place to keep one's hands clean, for there is much Smoke there, yea, and Soot also. But the hands of the Damsel that brought us the food, they were clean.

And I said, If the hands that bear food are clean, I care little for the hands that make the change. But I should not have noticed the Soiled Hands of the Cashier if she had not worn a Very Large Ring.

And I considered the lessons thereof. And I remembered what a very wise man had said of a Jewel of Gold in a Swine's Snout.

THE UNOPENED WINDOW

NOW there came to me a man with a Sad Countenance, and he said, O Safed, thy words of wisdom are known to all men, and thy virtue exceedeth even thy wisdom; may thy days be long among men.

And I heard him, and I answered not; for the man who cometh unto me with a Little Too Much Taffy and Then Some hath an Axe to Grind. And I said, If thou hast Business, say on; for Time Passeth.

And he said, O Safed, I have a neighbor, and he is an Undesirable Citizen. His house joineth hard unto mine upon the North, and he annoyeth me continually. He and his Kids keep up a continual Rough House, which greatly annoyeth us. And he hath Daughters, and there come to see them Young Men, who sit with them on the Porch till Any Old Time at Night, and they Laugh and Raise Ned so that sleep is driven from our eyes, and slumber from our eyelids. Yea, and when we look that way we see things that Vex our Righteous Souls.

And I said, Are they Immoral? If so thou mayest call the Police.

And he said, They are not what you might call Immortal, for my wife hath watched them much through the Window; she hath a place where she sitteth and watcheth while she Darneth Stockings; yet are they noisy; yea, they are the Limit.

And I said unto him, How many windows hath thy house?

And he said, My house standeth Foursquare, and it hath windows toward the North, the South, the East and the West.

And I said unto him, Move thou over to the South side of thy House; thou shalt have more Sleep and Sunshine. Yea, moreover, speak thou unto thy wife that she Darn her Stockings where she hath less to see.

And he went away angry.

But I counted it among my Good Deeds.

And I meditated thereon, and I considered that there are many people who live on the North Side of their own Souls; yea, they curse God that they hear the racket and are sad; and behold, their South Windows are unopened.

THE FLOWER IN THE OBSTRUCTION

NOW it came to pass in one of my journeys that I lodged with a Friend who in former years did Preach, but now hath Retired, and liveth in a goodly Little City wherein is a College, and where in former years he Preached. And he hath bought for himself an House, situated where two streets cross, and he liveth Happily and Quietly and Usefully. Even so may the Lord grant me Grace and Cash wherewith to live when I come to his time of life.

Now, the boys of the city pass his home on their way to School, and divers of them turn the Corner there; and having learned from a certain teacher called Euclid, whose theories no man disputeth because few Understand Them, that the Square on the Hypothenuse is equal to the Square upon the other two sides, and having some doubt about it, they create an Hypothenuse across the Lawn of my friend, in order to find if it be not true that the Hypothenuse is shorter than the way around the Corner.

Now, the Neighbors of my Friend spake unto him, saying:

Those Infernal Boys will Ruin thy Lawn. Go to, Make a Stumbling Block in their Path, and make it of Barb Wire, that they entangle themselves therein and be pricked with the Goads, and cease to ruin thy front Yard.

So my Friend built a Stumbling Block and placed it in their Path, but of Barb Wire builded he not. He built it of stone, and filled it in with earth, and he dug it, and dunged it, and therein he planted flowers.

And the boys thereafter kept to the walk, and they looked at the flowers and admired them, and they spake:

Lo, the Good Man hath planted a Flower Bed in his Lawn; now Shall we Keep on the Walk lest we injure it; and to walk around it were more Bother than to Keep in the Great Highway.

And the Boys never suspected that it was for their sake he planted the Flowers, nor that the Flowers were planted to Beautify the Bunker.

Now, when I beheld this, I said to my soul:

Behold, my Friend is not only a person of kind heart, but also a Man of Great Wisdom. How easily he might have wakened the resentment of the Youthful Soul, whereas he hath gladdened the heart of the neighborhood, saved his Lawn and kept the good will of the Boys.

Then I thought of the many Stumbling Blocks which good men have erected in the Path of the Sinful, and how often they have become futile, for I have beheld Youth Vaulting gaily over the Barbed Wire, and landing with his Heels deep in the turf on the farther side. And I said to my soul:

Whenever it is necessary to erect a hurdle across the path of the wicked or the thoughtless, I will seek out a Flower and plant thereon. And the same shall be reckoned unto me for Righteousness as well as practical Good Sense.

THE ICE THAT MELTED

NOW it came to pass in the Summer that I visited in a Town wherein I had a friend who was a Lawyer; and he had an Office that fronted on the Court House Square. And the weather was so hot the Sidewalks Sizzled; and his office was Not Very Cool. And he bought a Water Cooler, and paid for the same Six Dollars. And he ordered the Ice-man to leave every morning Twenty-five Pounds of Ice on the Sidewalk that ran hard by his office. And he put the Ice in the Water Cooler, and he poured Water thereon, and he Drank, and he whistled a tune, the name whereof was, Never Mind the Weather. And he thrust his head out of the Window and he called to his friends in the Court House, even to the Sheriff and the Surveyor and the Recorder, and he said, Come across; the Drinks are on me! And they came across and drank of his Ice Water, which was better than some of them sometimes drank.

Now, the Iceman came early in the morning, and the Lawyer came late. And the sun beat down on the Sidewalk Something Fierce. And it beat upon his Ice, and it Melted. And after the second or the third morning the

lump of Ice was very small, and the Wet Spot about it was exceeding large.

And it came to pass that I visited him on the first day of October, when the quarterly bills for Ice came round; and the Iceman had charged him for Twenty-five Pounds of Ice every day from the first day of July till the thirtieth day of September, and the Price of Ice was High. And he was of a sad countenance; for about Twenty Pounds of that Twenty-five had melted on the Sidewalk.

And he rang up the Iceman and complained. And he said, Behold, Thou gavest me Short Weight.

And the Iceman answered and said, Go thou to grass! If thou tarriest in thy bed in the morning and lettest the ice melt on thy front walk, We should worry. Get thou busy and send in the Cash, for we can use it in our business.

And he knew that the Iceman was right.

And he sent in the money, and he was sad.

And I said to myself, The man who letteth the years go by in hope of joys to come, and who getteth not busy and useth the joys that God sendeth to him with the dawn of every day, and who cometh to his latter years with little to comfort him and with many regrets, he is like unto the man who riseth late in summer, and in the autumn must pay for a Wet Spot on the Sidewalk.

TWO SHADOWS

NOW it came to pass in the Summer that I sojourned by the side of a Little Lake that lay to the westward of my habitation. And there was an evening when I watched the Sun as it was going down, and behold it was Glorious. And as I turned away from it and entered my dwelling, behold mine own Shadow went before me, and climbed up upon the inner wall of the Room as I entered. And as I went forward, lo, another Shadow rose upon the wall, and it was like unto the first, even mine own Shadow. And I marveled much that one man should cast Two Shadows. And the Thing Seemed Passing Strange.

But the reason was this, that the Sun as it was going down shone on the water and was like unto another Sun, and cast a Shadow even brighter and taller than the Sun in the heavens. For the Sun in the heavens was partly obscured by the trees; but the Sun in the lake cast its reflected rays under the branches and shone clearly. And so it was that in the sight of men the reflected Sun was brighter than the real Sun, and cast the greater and taller Shadow.

And I thought within my soul how to men the vision of the Most High God is often obscured; and how there be men who must see the exceeding brightness of His Person by reflected light. And I prayed to my God that such light of Him as I may reflect might reveal to such men as behold it the true glory of the Sun of Righteousness.

CONCERNING LEMONS

NOW it came to pass that I journeyed to a far country called California. And there I found a friend, a citizen of that country, and he had an Automobile, and he took me on swift journeys to show me Orange Groves and Grape Fruit Orchards, and Vineyards, and many trees whereon grew Prunes.

And it came to pass that I heard often of a town called Corona, and always this was said of it:

Corona, Home of the Lemon.

Now on a day we passed through Corona, and the day was warm and dusty, and I spake to my friends:

Behold, this is Corona, the Home of the Lemon. Let us tarry, I pray thee, for of lemons are concocted a cunning drink that maketh glad the heart of man and doth not intoxicate.

So we rode through the street, and we came to a place where it was written:

Ice Cream, Soda Water, Sundaes and All Kinds of Soft Drinks.

And we alighted from the chariot, and went in, and behold, a man in a White Apron.

And I was about to speak to him, but my friend spake :
Be thou silent, and keep thy money in thine own pocket ; I am paying for this.

And I kept silent willingly, for those are pleasant words to hear.

Then spake my friend to the man in the white apron :
Hasten thee, lad, and prepare for us four good, ice-cold lemonades, and make them Good, and make them Speedily.

And the man in the White Apron heard him as one who understood not what he said.

Then spake my friend again :

This friend of mine is from Chicago, and these other friends are from Boston, and they think they know what good lemonade is ; but I want them to have a drink of lemonade that is Lemonade. Hasten thee, and prepare it for them.

Then spake the man in the White Apron :

We have no Lemonade.

And the man of California grew red in the face, and he said : What ? No lemonade in Corona, the home of the lemon ?

And the man in the white apron answered, We have Soda Water, Root Beer, Ginger Ale, Ice Cream, but no lemonade.

Then spake my friend :

Hasten now to the grocery store, and buy a half-dozen good lemons, and quickly make us Lemonade.

And the man in the White Apron hastened, and returned, and said :

There isn't a lemon in town. They ship them all to Chicago and Boston.

And when I heard this I meditated, and I said:

I have suffered for lack of good Fish at the Seashore, and Fresh Eggs in the Country, when both were abundant in Town, and now I behold that the place to buy good Lemonade is where they do not raise Lemons.

And as I meditated, I remembered that in many other things the shoemaker's wife goeth unshod.

Now my business is commending goodness for export, even as that of Corona is the production of lemons. And I said within myself: Glad will I be if the demand for goodness ever shall grow like the demand for lemons from Corona, and I will seek to supply all the demand. Yet will I seek to keep some of it on hand; for my peril is even as the peril of the man in the white apron. Yea, he shall be to me as a Parable, lest having preached to others I should become a Castaway.

So I resolved that with all my exportation of goodness, I would keep some for Home Consumption.

WHEN IT IS HOT IN CALIFORNIA

NOW it came to pass in my journeyings, that I came to a country called California, and every man who met me Greeted me with a Smile, and asked:

How dost thou like our Climate?

And not one among them all waited for my Answer, but proceeded to tell me that California hath the most Wonderful Climate in the World.

Now it fell on a day that the Weather was Hot, and the Thermometer stood at 103 in the shade; and on that day I met a Californian, and he looked me in the eye as calmly as though it were only 70, and asked me:

In terrible weather like this, art thou not glad that thou canst be in California, with its Wonderful Climate, and not burning up with heat in the Hot, Wicked, Windy City of Chicago?

And I was too amazed for Speech, but that did not matter. He did all the Talking Necessary, telling me again of the Wonderful Climate of California.

And all the while I was thinking, and there rose before my mind a vision of Chicago, with a place called Lincoln Park, where the cool Lake Winds play, and where

one may sit with his Coat off, and drink soda water, and lie down on the Grass. And I smiled within myself at the Californian, and said within myself, that he had spoken Foolishly.

But again I thought within myself, and I reasoned thus:

Lo, this man hath come to California to live, and to him it is the Best Place on earth. Wherefore, when conditions arise that are Unpleasant in California, he Comforteth himself by thinking that they must be much Worse Elsewhere. So he thanketh God still that he liveth in California, making even his Discomforts the occasion of New Thankfulness.

And when I thought of these things, I Honored him.

Wherefore, when I returned to mine own city, I resolved that I would do likewise, and meet every condition that was adverse with the assurance that it was much worse everywhere else. And I find that it worketh well in making me Content with my own lot.

But, although I am a man of courage, I have not yet found grace to say to a man of California who chanceth to be in mine own city in a day when the weather is below zero, Art not thou glad on such a day that thou art not in California?

THE SHIP THAT SUNK

NOW I stood on the bank of a River whereon had been builded the Great City wherein I dwell. And another Dweller in the City spake to me, and said,

Behold how great a City we have Builded. Walk ye round Chicago; consider well her palaces. Mark ye well her skyscrapers, that ye may tell it to the generation following, and to such as dwell in other and lesser towns. Yea, behold the River. For it was once a Sluggish Creek, and We have digged us a great Canal, and have turned the River upstream, so that it Emptieth not into the Lake but into the Gulf, a Thousand Miles away.

And I looked, and behold, a Great Ship, and it was laden with Passengers. And many hundreds went aboard, and they Laughed, and they were Happy. For it was an Holiday to them, and they were intending to Sail afar, and enjoy an Happy Day together.

And the multitude of them gathered upon the one side of the Ship away from Shore where we Stood, and behold the Ship Turned Over at the Dock, and more than a Thousand Men and Women, yea, and Little Children also, were Drowned.

And all the power of all the Mighty Men of the Great City was Futile in its efforts to save them. Howbeit, many were saved, yet were many hundreds lost.

Yea, and the power of men that had turned the River so that it flowed upstream made a Current the more swift to sweep them down to death.

And one spake to me as I stood, and thus said he,

Where is now thy God, who sendeth down to swift death the merry company of those who were happy but an hour ago? Is this the will of God, or is it only fate? Or doth God love to mock the Puny Power of Man?

And I said to him,

Alas, I am but a man, and very frail and ignorant. Very little do I know of the mysteries of God. Yet thus it seemeth to me that God hath willed that overloaded structures should give way, and overloaded Ships should sink, and ships too slenderly built, and unequally laden should overturn; that so man shall be compelled, by all the Hazards which God can invent, to do His work not only Greatly but well, and all the time with Confidence Chastened with Humility.

Yet of this am I sure, that God mocketh not the enterprise of man, but delighteth in every Conquest of man over Nature. For our God is not a God of wrath, neither doth He hate what His hands have made, but like as a Father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. Yea, He pitieth them that fear Him not.

Now these things I spake, not because I understood all mysteries, but only because, unwise as I am and foolish,

there are others yet more unwise. And so I spake with such Wisdom as I have. And where my little Wisdom faileth, as it faileth soon, then and always do I walk by faith.

And my heart was heavy with sorrow for the children of men.

THE FOUR SHEEP

NOW as I passed by I beheld and lo, there were four sheep in a pen outside the shop of a Butcher. And I stopped and listened, and I thought I heard them speak one to another.

And one of the Sheep, an ancient Ram, said to his companions, Behold, we are all to be killed and eaten, and it mattereth little by whom. I care not whether my Tough Old Carcass should be Consumed by a Millionaire or a Miller; nor care I for my wool, whether it shall be woven into garments for the Prince or the Pauper. Moreover, I perceive that both the flesh and the wool are divided and scattered, so that the flesh of one sheep may feed Several Families, or the wool thereof be woven with other wool into Many and Diverse Garments. But with the Hide it is not so; but it continueth, and is not merged with other Leather. Come, therefore, and choose ye, one by one. To what purpose will ye devote your Skins?

And one of the Sheep answered and said, Let my skin be made into a Genuine Seal or Morocco Purse, and therein let some rich man carry Money.

And all the other Sheep said, Bah.

And the second said, Let my skin be made into a pair of Genuine White Kid Gloves, of Nineteen Buttons each, and let them adorn the hands and arms of Beauty.

And all the other Sheep said, Bah.

And the third said, Let my skin be made into a College Diploma, and inscribed in Latin, and sent abroad into the World of Scholarship.

And two of the Sheep were silent, but the Ancient Ram said, Bah.

Then turned the other three to the Ancient Ram, and said, Thou hast said Bah to every one of us. What wilt thou do with thy tough old Hide?

And the Ancient Ram answered,

Why should a Sheep give his skin to Carry Money when the Nations are using Money only to burn it up in War? And why should he give his hide for gloves to adorn the arms of Beauty, that be only to twine around the Neck of the Soldier? And why should there be any College Diplomas so long as the world erects its Monuments not to its Scholars but its Slayers? Behold, of my skin shall they make a Drum-head, and the armies of the world shall march to the pounding of it.

And all the sheep were silent.

Then asked I the Butcher,

What shall be done with the Leather from the backs of these four sheep?

And he answered, Of these skins will they make Cow-hide wherewith to Cushion Automobiles; yea, and all four of them are not sufficient for One Taxi.

And as I passed on I meditated on the Ambitions of Sheep and of Men.

HOW THINGS ARE MADE INTO SOMETHING ELSE

NOW I entered into a Great Factory, and I asked of my friend,, the Manager, What dost thou Manufacture?

And he answered, We spin not, nor gather into barns; we Manufacture nothing; yet we Create almost everything.

And I said to him, Riddle me no riddles, but speak plainly.

And he said, The business of this Factory is Making things into Something Else.

And he showed me a Bale of Cotton Cloth which had been woven in the South, and one piece thereof he dyed Black, and put it through a Crinkling Machine, and thereof made he Crape. And another piece he dyed Brown, and put it through a Glossing machine that made one side Shiny, and thereof made he Linen; and another piece he Mercerized, and thereof made he Silk; and another piece he Waterproofed, and thereof made he Oil-cloth; and another piece loaded he with Starch and Clay, and thereof made he Leather; and of another piece made

the Khaki for the uniforms of soldiers; and another piece made he thick and hard and stiff for the making of Corsets.

And I said to him, Dost thou of another piece make Copper Roofing, and of another Concrete Sidewalk, and of another Armor Plate?

And he said, Nay, we have not gotten to that as yet. But every piece of Cloth that comes to us we endeavor to Fit Better to its Special Use.

And I said, Is it not a Cheat?

And he said, Nay. If in certain places Cotton can be given a Silk Finish, and made to take the place of Silk, is it not well that it should be so? And if the Lining of a shoe or the Outside of a Valise can be made of Cotton Cloth and Clay, and thereby Leather be Saved, is it not better so? If men take our Cloth and call it leather, the sin be upon their own hands. As for us, it is enough that in the place where it is to serve, we make it better for its use.

And I spake unto him, saying,

I also run a Factory, not unlike to thine. For therein do I manufacture no Men, yet do I seek to take such as come to me and Fit them the better, each for his Place in Life.

And he said, It is even so. But not even this mill of mine can make Real Leather out of Cotton! Even so cannot thy Church make a Bad man Good.

And I spake unto him, Nay, thou speakest unwisely. For the Grace of God can change the skin of the Ethio-

pian and the Spots of the Leopard ; and I have seen in my Factory more wonderful things than all thou hast shown to me this day. Wonderful is thy Factory, but mine is more so, yea, and more useful.

And I returned to mine Own Job, well content with that which God hath given to me ; for He divideth to every man his work, and I would rather work on Manhood as Raw Material than on Cotton Cloth.

Yet am I the wiser man for what I have seen done to Cotton Cloth in the Factory of my Friend.

THE BOSTON STATUARY

NOW I walked the streets of a Great City, even Boston. And I met a friend who walked with me to the Public Library, and he spake thus,

Which is the greater, he who hath a book of his Own Writing on the shelves of the Public Library, or he whose Statue in Bronze is erected in a park?

And I answered not.

And he said, He whose book is read hath Greater Honor than he whose Statue is erected in the Park; for he giveth his own thoughts to men and they think them after him. Whereas, he whose statue is erected in the park may be an Orator or Chief of Police, the founder of an University or the Captain of a Football Team. Nevertheless, there be many books that men do not read. Whereas, of Monuments erected in the Park must all men take note.

And he said, Come with me and let us look on the faces of some of these Great Men in Bronze.

And I walked abroad with him. And he said,

Here in the Public Garden is the Newest Statue in Boston, and it is of Wendell Philips, friend of the Black

Man. And nigh unto it is another of William Ellery Channing, who pleaded the Cause of the Slave. And not far away is William Lloyd Garrison, who would not Compromise, and would not Equivocate, and would not be Silent, and Would be Heard. And he, too, was the friend of the Black Man. Behold, how Boston honoreth these men, and all of them were friends of the Slave. And now all men behold their faces, and are inspired by their ideals. While as for books, how many there be in the Public Library which no man readeth. Wherefore, let me erect the Statues of a city and I care not who may write her Books and I pressed him, and said, Let us go farther; for I am interested.

And hard by the Common he showed me the Statue of Abraham Lincoln, liberating the Black Man. And on the one side of the Common he showed me where St. Gaudens had wrought in living bronze Robert Gould Shaw on horseback, leading his Regiment of black troops. Yea, he led me across the Common to the Monument in Memory of the Heroes of the Boston Massacre, and at the top of the Monument was the name of Crispus Attucks, and he was a Black Man.

And while we gazed thereon there came to us another friend, and he said,

Lo, I have Three Dollars that I long to blow in. Come with me and see The Birth of a Nation.

And the place was hard by, even over against the Monument of the Black Man, Crispus Attucks.

And we entered, and the lights were turned off, and behold there appeared Pictures on the Screen. And from the Pictures I learned how little Wendell Philips and William Lloyd Garrison knew. Yea, I learned that the real Saviours of the Nation were the Ku-Klux-Klan, who rode about in the Night with Masks and other Disguises, and who whipped Women and Shot Men.

And I said in my haste, All Historians are Liars. Let me make the movies for a city and I care not who may erect the statues.

For I had listened, and the music which the people applauded was Dixie, and the people whom they cheered were the Ku-Klux-Klan.

But I remembered the word of the Lord by his Prophet, Behold, Pharoah, King of Egypt, is a Big Noise. For many of the prophets lighted up their messages with slang.

Yea, and I have seen the Mummy of Pharaoh in a Museum, and have stubbed my toe over broken images of his greatness in the land where he Ruled.

And I reflected that after the film hath gone up in smoke, Philips and Channing and Shaw and Garrison and Lincoln still will be there.

THE MUSKMELON RINDS

NOW the Summer waxed late as the Year cometh toward Autumn, and the mornings were Cool. Wherefore I rose up in the morning and took of the Wood that was in that place, and I kindled a Fire upon the Hearth, even a fire of Logs. And it burned brightly, and I rejoiced before it, and I said, Aha, am I not warm?

And we sat down to Breakfast, I and Keturah, the wife of my bosom. And Keturah set before me the half of a Canteloupe, and the other half thereof did she eat. And after we had eaten I took the Rinds and cast them into the fire. For so is the best way of Garbage Disposal, and it inviteth not Skunks, such as come out of the woods to eat of the Rinds which are thrown out. And so it was when I threw the Rinds into the fire that they fell side by side, and lay upon the burning logs. And the fire came through, and lapped their sides, as if they had been two Pots with Victuals cooking therein. And one of them began to shrivel and be consumed, and the other filled with Juice and did Simmer and Sing.

And Keturah spake unto me, and said, Safed, my lord.

And I answered, Trouble me not, for I am meditating.

-And she said, Whereon dost thou meditate?

And I said, Oh, Keturah, behold the Melon Rinds, how one of them is shriveled with the fire, yea already is an Hole burned through it, while the Other is Half Full of Juice, and singeth merrily. Even so is Life; and a like experience doth thus Oppositely Affect Two Lives that are side by side. Why is it thus? And why hath the Lord so dealt with us? For He hath mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth.

And my wife Keturah looked also at the Melon Rinds in the Fire and she said, Oh, Safed, thou art a very Wise Man, yet in some things are thou very simple. Understandest not thou what thou seest? and callest thou in question the Whole Scheme of things because thou seest not all that happeneth before thine eyes?

And I said to her, What seest thou more than I see?

And Keturah answered, The Melon that is soon shriveled is thy Melon, for thou didst dig it out closer to the rind than I. Yea, in one place thy Spoon did jab so near the Bottom that there the fire came quickly through, and the little Juice thou didst leave therein ran out. But I ate not down where the Melon is Green and Hard, but took only that which was good, wherefore did I eat less and enjoy more. Yea, and therefore was there more Juice left in my melon which appeared when the Rind got Hot; and when it Boiled, then it Sang, yea, and the Hotter the Fire became the more it Sang. So doth the Lord have mercy on whom He will have mercy, yea, on

everyone who maketh not a fool of himself. And such, my lord, is life.

And I meditated much on her saying, for truly she is a Wise Woman. But as I sat before the Fire and did meditate, she spake to me.

Come now, and meditate no longer. For the Maid hath gone to Visit her Sister and see the New Baby, and I have the work to do. Wherefore come thou and wipe the Dishes.

And I went and Wiped the Dishes for her, although Dish Wiping is a Job that a man liketh not. But as I wiped the dishes I meditated that there is much Philosophy in the world that is of Less Value than the Dishwiping of Keturah.

THE PARACHUTE

NOW as I journeyed I came to a City called Boston, and I walked on a Great Highway called Beacon Street, hard by the Common. And as I walked I saw men Looking Upward, and I also Looked. And behold, a man Descending out of the Sky. And I looked to see him descend upon the Common, and he descended not there, but the wind blew him afar, and at a great height so that he flew over the Dome of the State House, which is the Gilded Hub of the Universe. And my heart was disturbed within me, and I said, Lo, this Aviator hath descended out of an Aeroplane, and he intended to come down upon the Common, where there is Grass, and the wind hath carried him far beyond, and he will alight where there are Houses, and where streets are Narrow, and it may be he will be Dashed to Pieces. And the Parachute wherewith he descended Swelled out in the Wind, and sailed afar. And many people ran to be at the spot where he should descend. And I ran not, for I like not to look on men when they are dashed to pieces.

But he Descended in safety, albeit in a Narrow Street, and among people about three thousand in number, and

nothing harmed him, for the Parachute held Safely and he did not dash his foot against the Stones of Granite wherewith the street is paved.

Now when I heard that he descended in safety I was glad, for it is good to know that a man may be master of the Elements, and may conquer the Air as he may conquer Land and Sea. Yet was I glad that I was not in his place.

And I meditated about many things. I thought of the Peril which a man assumeth who elevateth himself above his fellow men; and how readily it may hap that his elevation above them shall be the Occasion whereby he Loses Fellowship with them. For behold how Feeble we all were, and Powerless to Help, while he hung there above the head of the Multitude, and we could do nothing, yea, though he had fallen at our very feet. Even so there be souls so Isolate that, though they have their habitation amid the throng, yet sail they apart from the concerns of others men's lives, and they are seen in peril, but no man can help.

And I prayed my God that while He shall keep my head up, and my face ever toward the sky, yet may I be kept in Sympathy with Common Life, and with my feet planted firmly on the Earth. And though this be not so Conspicuous, yet may it be Safer.

Yea, and I remembered that in some sort God hath lifted me above many of the conditions of life of the multitude, so that I toil not with my hands in brick or mortar, nor in the tilling of the soil; and I prayed Him for a humble heart.

Yea, and I considered again how Perilous is the Situation of him who, either by his own Vanity or the will of God, is elevated in any wise above his fellows. And I prayed to my God that in so far as the office of the Ministry Constitutes such an Elevation, God would guard me therein, that I might not use it for vain Flights of Oratory, nor Sail in my Preaching above the Heads of the People, neither seek to make them Admire my Agility, but rather that He would Bear me up, lest I dash my foot against a Stone, and provide for me a Good Place to Alight.

All this I considered when I beheld the man in the Parachute, and I resolved that I would write these meditations for the benefit of such of my Brethren as might be in need thereof.

THE FAITH OF THE BANK OF MOUNTMELICK

NOW, it came to pass in ancient times when one might Travel on the Sea without fear of being blown up by Submarines, that I entered into a Ship, and visited a land called England. And as the days of my return drew nigh, I Sailed across the narrow channel to a country called Ireland. And after some days in that country, the time drew near when I should return to my own country. So I went to a Money Changer and said unto him :

Take now my Letter of Credit, and mark thereon a Certain Sum, and give me sufficient Silver and Gold of Great Britain to furnish me till I sail, and some money of mine own country, even gold for the man in the Custom House, and bills for my Railway Ticket, that I return not to my own country a beggar.

And he took my Letter of Credit, and did even as I said.

Now it came to pass that as I counted the Money of mine own Country, I found therein a bill for One Dollar, being a Greenback, the like whereof I see Every Day in mine own country, though Never as Many of them as I

could wish. And this bill had stamped upon the back of it, with a rubber stamp and purple ink, as if it had been the personal check of some Irish grocer unknown in Dublin or Queenstown these words :

Payment Guaranteed
by the
Bank of Mountmellick.

Now I had never heard of Mountmellick, and I Judged it to be no Great City, and I thought with scorn that the bank in that town had done an Unnecessary Thing in Guaranteeing the Promise of the United States of America to pay to the Bearer One Silver Dollar. I said to myself in irony :

The Bank of Mountmellick hath done a Presumptuous thing, and soiled with its dirty rubber stamp a bill to which it hath imparted no added value.

Then I considered how it might have been that such a bill should have gotten to Mountmellick. And I saw a vision of an Irish girl working in some Kitchen in mine own land, sending home to her mother her first spare dollar. And I considered that when she went to spend it for food or calico it might well have been that no merchant of Mountmellick would accept it from her until the Bank of Mountmellick endorsed it.

Now when I thought of these things, I said :

Behold, it appeareth to me that the Bank of Mountmellick hath Maintained the Credit of the United States of America to the Extent of One Dollar, and hath done well.

Then I considered, and I remembered that God had entrusted to men certain Talents and other Elements of Trust, whose value among men is even as the credit of a bank or a Nation, and that there are places where men do not know God any better than the Old Woman in Ireland knew the Currency of the United States. And I asked myself, Is it not possible that there may be places in which the goodness of God is at a Discount, or even Not Negotiable, save as some man by his life doth make men believe in goodness, both their own and God's?

And I pondered much of this, and I remembered certain words of Holy Writ that testify that even such are the Responsibilities of men who Profess the Love of God. And I resolved that if I might, I would seek, to the full amount of my Character and Ability, to make God's goodness go among men at its Full Face Value.

And I did not spend the dollar with the stamp of the Bank of Mountmellick, though often I had need, but kept it as a Parable, for I said to myself, I am seeking in my small way to be to God as a rubber stamp on one small promise of the Almighty.

THE TROLLEY CAR AND ITS MASTER

NOW it was the Sabbath Day, and I had Preached once, and taught a Bible Class, and Attended a Committee Meeting, and done Divers Deeds beside, and I had yet to Preach again, and to perform Sundry Other Duties, and there came to me a Call from the Hospital, saying, Come Hither, and see a Man who is Sick, and who Inquireth for thee.

And the Street which runneth Hard by my Church is a Broad Highway, in the middle of which run Two Iron Tracks, and on the Tracks run swift Chariots, whereon any man may ride who hath the price. And the Chariots run nigh unto the Hospital. So I walked into the Street where another street Crosseth it, and I hailed a Chariot as it approached, and the driver of the Chariot made the Chariot to stand still, and I climbed upon the Rear Platform, where stood the Master of the Chariot. And he wore Blue Clothes with Brass Buttons. And above his head was a Sign which saith in the Language of Chicago,

Pay as you enter,

but which in the speech of them that dwell in Boston saith,

Prepayment Car.

So I searched in my Bag, and I found Five Cents, and I gave them unto the Master of the Chariot, and he rang One Bell once, and another Bell rang he twice. And the meaning of the ringing of the two bells was this, that the bell which he Rang Twice signified unto the Driver of the Chariot, who stood on the Front end of the same, that the Passenger was on board, and the Chariot might proceed; and the Bell that he rang once signified that the Passenger had Separated himself from his Fare, and that the Fare was in Possession of the Master of the Chariot, who must later Account for the same to his Masters. For though he be Master of the Chariot, yet are there other Masters greater than he, who Boss him, and the City.

Now I had ridden from time to time on this same Chariot, so that the Master thereof and I knew each other's faces. And as I was paying my Fare, I thought to speak to him Pleasantly, and thus I said,

You and I have to work on Sunday.

Now the Master of the Chariot heard what I said, and he smiled at me as one who smileth Pleasantly and Indulgently at an Innocent Delusion, and he answered in the Speech of the Emerald Isle,

Yiss, Av ye Loike to call it Wurrrrrk that ye do.

And he continued to smile as I passed on, and I entered into the Chariot and took my seat.

And his smile was not the smile of one that mocketh, neither of him that hateth, but of him that knoweth and discerneth in his own mind what is wurrrrrk and what

seemeth to the man who toileth to be wurrrrk but is not. For I think he liketh me, and he hath often showed the same when I have ridden with him. Only he thought me mistaken when I spake of my Job as Work.

And I said to myself, Lo, why should this wild Irishman sit in judgment on my toil, and esteem it as though I labored not at all? Five years ago he came to this land and had no money, and he Carried the Hod, yea, and perhaps wrote back to Ireland, saying,

Pat, Come on Over. This is a Fine Country with Good Wages, and no work. I toil not, but only carry a Hod of Brick up a Long Ladder, and the man at the top doeth all the Work.

Yet now he rideth all day in his chariot, and hath nothing to do save ring his two Bells, and Pay over his money at night.

And I thought within myself, How little he knoweth of the Burdens I carry, or the hours I toil, so that I esteem his task Light compared with mine own, and could say to him,

Yes, if you like to call it work that you do.

Then I remembered that he, perhaps, had other burdens than I could see. And I wondered if he Sent Money home to an old Mother in Ireland, or if he had a Sick Child, or if he struggled against some inward sorrow that made his toil heavy. And I thought of the labors and travails of all my Fellow Men, and I said in my heart that I would judge none of them with respect to the Work he did or the Burden he carried, for God hath appointed

to every man his labor. And I purposed in my heart that, though my own Work were hard, yet would I seek to bear the burdens of others, and so fulfill the Law of Christ.

Yet now and then, when my toil is heavy, and I labor long into the Night, I smile within myself, and say to myself in the speech of Ireland,

Yiss, av ye loike to call it wurrrrrk that ye do.

THE RUBBER DAM

NOW, in the city where I dwell is a Dentist, and I entered his Shop, and sat me down in a Chair, and I said to the Dentist, I have a Tooth.

And he looked in my Mouth, and he said, It is a Bad One, but I will Endeavor to Fill it.

So he closed my Mouth with a Rubber Dam.

And as he did so, he Made Jokes about the Dam ; but I cared not for them, for they were not Very Good Jokes, and I knew that he Made Them to all his customers. Moreover, I had other things to think of. And he fastened the Rubber Dam around my Neck with a Stay, which had a Clamp at either end, and the two Clamps held to the two ends of the Rubber Dam.

And one of the Clamps laid hold of One Hair of my Beard.

Now what the Dentist did to my Tooth was a Plenty, and it caused me Sore Pain ; but I bore it without murmur, and I could not Talk. But all the Time I felt the Pain of the One Hair that the Clamp was pulling.

And after he had Worked at my Tooth for the space of Two Hours, he let me go.

And he removed the Rubber Dam, and he noticed that he had been pulling One Hair of my Beard.

And he said, I discovered that I have been Pulling One Hair, but I Think Thou canst not have noticed it in the Greater Pain of the Tooth. For I did bore to the Depth of the Fourth Part of the Length of thy Backbone.

And I answered, Thou hast Another Think Coming. I noticed it Every Second, and it Hurt.

And he Laughed, and he Mocked me, and he said, Next Time I will try to Hurt thee enough with my Drill so thou shalt not notice so Small a Thing.

And I said to him, That is where thou dost get left. For next time I go to another Dentist. Moreover, thou art Dead Wrong about the Philosophy of the Whole Business. For consciousness of the Greater Pain doth in No Wise Obliterate the lesser, and ofttimes it doth Aggravate it.

And he said, That is a New One on me.

And I said, I bore the Greater Pain without Complaint, because I had Faith to Believe that it was Doing Good; but I Complained about the Lesser Pain because I knew that it was needless.

And I meditated much about this; for Often I have seen Men, yea, and ofttimes Women, who bear with Great Fortitude the Pain that must be, even the Pain which their Faith teaches them is for the Best, but they Resent it when they Suffer the Small Annoyances that are Needless and Valueless. Yea, though the sorrows of Life Bore to the Depth of their heart, they bear it Bravely behind

Life's Rubber Dam; but they Kick against the Pricks of Life's Needless Pains.

And I said in my heart that I would seek so far as in me lay to avoid the Pulling of the single Hair that adds to the Life of my Brother Man a Needless Pain.

THE RIDE IN THE COUNTRY

NOW, there was a Convention in a Town named Lonelyville, and the sons of the prophets who live nigh unto that place wrote me a letter, saying,

Come, O Safed, and Address our Convention. Many Great Men will speak there, and many Willing Listeners will hear. And the Little Church wherein we meet will not be Sufficient to Hold the Multitude that attend. And at Noon the Wives of the Farmers shall feed thee on Chicken Pie, and Cake that will melt in thy Mouth.

So I went to the Convention.

An hundred miles I rode upon the Train, and Ten Miles had I yet to go. And the city to which the Train took me and where it left me was called Junctionville.

So I left the Train at Junctionville and the Train also left me. And I walked through the streets of Junctionville. And one said unto me, What seek ye? And he said, Behold yonder is a Garage.

And I said to him, Nay, for I would find a Livery Stable.

And he said, If thou dost insist, behold there is one in the next street, but few people go there now.

But I said to my soul, Behold the Town to which I go is a Little Town, and the people are Farmers. If they see me riding up in an Automobile they will think me a man of Pride, coming from the City to Cut a Swell. And I will ride in a Buggy, even as they ride. For I would be all things to all men. Nevertheless at home I call a Taxi.

So I sought the Livery Stable, and I said to the son of Jehu, Harness me a Swift Horse to a Comfortable Chariot, for I would drive to Lonelyville and back.

And he harnessed him. So I drove to Lonelyville.

And once in the fourth part of every Mile I had to turn out for some Farmer to Honk past me with his Ford.

And when I got to Lonelyville, behold the Horse shed was so full of Automobiles I had to hitch my Horse Outside. The Program Committee met me at the door and said, Thou are barely on time. We had begun to fear lest thou should not have come. Wherefore camest thou not in an Automobile?

And they said behind my back, He is a Slow Old Duffer, and Much behind the Times.

Now, when I had delivered my Speech, and eaten of the Chicken Pie, behold I drove back again Ten Miles to Junctionville, and all the way the Fords kept Crowding me into the Ditch and Honking past me.

And I said to my soul, There is such a thing as Possessing Too Much Humility.

And I swore by my Beard and the Sword of the Prophet that the next time I went to Deliver an address in some Little Country Village I would go in a Car with Six Cylinders.

THE HORSE AND THE TRICYCLE

NOW I have a friend who is older than I, and he did his Thinking nigh on to Fifty Years Ago, and if he hath had a New Think Since, it was by Accident. And he wrote a Book wherein he Denounced what he Thought were the Errors of the Day, but which were the Errors of the Day Before Yesterday, but he knew it not. And some of them had Ceased to be Errors; and that also had Escaped his Notice. And I was reading his Book as I rode upon the Train, and I meditated what I should say to him about it.

Now the Train Stopped in a Little City, and I saw beside the Platform an old Horse Harnessed to a Milk Wagon, and the Engines Whanged and Hooted, but he moved not. And the Automobiles Honked and he stood as one who said, I Should Worry, and he worried not. And a Motorcycle chugged past, and he Slept at the Switch. But a little girl came by on a Tricycle, and he Reared, and Pitched, and was sore afraid, so that he well nigh brake the Harness, and it required Two Men to hold him till the Little Girl got past.

And when I saw this, I knew what to write to my friend, and I wrote to him, and said,

Oh, my friend, well beloved, the Errors at which thou art Affrighted ceased to scare other Men about the time most Horses Stopped Shying at the Locomotive, and some of them Ceased to be discussed about the time Other Horses became Wise to the Gasoline Buggy. The only reason thou art alarmed at these Errors is that they are almost as Bearded with Moss as thou art. Oh, my friend, thou art a Back Number, even an Old Phogy. Thou dost shy at a Tricycle, and behold, the rest of the world is wonted to the Locomotive and the Automobile, yea, and the Ford, also.

And I knew not how my friend would love me for this Epistle, and I feared lest the Lesson might be lost on him. Therefore I was resolved to Profit by it Myself. And I prayed my God that if I must be Affrighted at anything it might not be at the things that already were gone by. And I resolved that having Learned to see some Errors which snort like Locomotives, and tear down the Pike like Automobiles, I would Endeavor to possess my Soul in Patience in the presence of Tricycles. Yea, I resolved in my Soul that I would learn to Stand without Hitching.

THE MORTAL SINS

NOW it came to pass that a great Comet flamed forth in the sky, and the Astronomers were busy, and many of the Humble Folk were afraid. And some said it portended War, and some Famine, but no war nor famine came then. Yea, the great War came some years later, and with it came no Comet. But it was a Fearsome sight, and men looked upon it with Awe. And the Astronomers declared that on a certain night the Earth would pass through the Tail of the Comet. And there were those who declared that we should never know it, and there were others who said we should be knocked into a Cocked Hat; and yet others said we should be killed by Poisonous Gas, such as the Germans fling at their Enemies.

Now afore that time, I journeyed into a land called Kentucky, and I lighted on a certain House, and I tarried there all night. And the people with whom I sojourned asked of me concerning the Comet, and what the Wise Men were saying about it, and on what Night it would meet the Earth, and whether I thought we should all be killed.

And the while we talked, an Ancient Woman sat in the chimney corner and smoked her Cob Pipe, and spat into the open fire. And after all the others had spoken, she filled her Pipe anew, and lighted it with a Coal from the open hearth, and she patted the coal with her toughened forefinger, and she puffed thrice till the Pipe was Smoking Up, and then she removed her pipe, and thus she spake :

Wall, I don't keer ef it hits the yarth or ef it don't. I ain't afeared to meet my God, no matter when He comes. Fur I hain't never played Flinch nor Rode Straddle.

Thus spake she, and was silent.

And all listened to her with respect.

Yea, in comparison of her we all felt Great Sinners.

She had avoided what to her were the Two Mortal Sins.

Now I never have played Flinch, but I am told that it is a Harmless Game, with Little either to Commend or Condemn it, but that some Young People play it with no Evil Effect on themselves or anyone. And albeit I am Old Enough to remember the Time when all Women who rode on Horses rode on one side, yet have I seen Modest Women riding astride. And hence I had not Classified Mortal Sins as this Ancient Woman did. Yet as I reflected I considered how many people there were like her, who count as Mortal Sins those which they have never been Tempted to Commit, and are ready to meet their God in peace by reason of their supposed virtues.

And I sometimes wonder how they really will feel at the Dread Day of Judgment, if they find that what they

Counted for Sins in Others were not sins at all, and that their own freedom from the same hath been reckoned no Virtue; but that there have been other Faults of theirs which the Recording Angel did not fail to Notice.

For all women and most men have in them something of the spirit of that Ancient Woman. And if the Comet should really come they might be Surprised.

THE WORDS AND MUSIC

NOW among the men whom I count my friends is a Great Musician. And he standeth before his Orchestra, wherein are an hundred men, and he swingeth his arms and wieldeth a Baton, and they Play. And they play skillfully with a loud noise, even upon the Timbrel and the Harp, the Viol and the Pipe, and the Dulcimer and the Cornet and the Sackbut. And he said to me,

Music is the Language of Heaven, and the true Language of Souls. Words are Clumsy Makeshifts; for a Word meaneth one thing to one man, and Another Thing to another man, and Nothing Whatever to another man, and many kinds of things to the Dictionary. Wherefore when thou Preachest, thy Trumpet giveth forth an Uncertain Sound. But with my trumpets it is not so.

And I said, Thinkest thou that men hear Music with more United Minds than they hear a Sermon?

And he said, Verily it is so. When thou preachest, one man thinketh of his Business, and another of the Price of Gasoline; and one woman thinketh of her Bonnet and another of her Neighbor's Bonnet. There is no Unity. But with Music it is not so. Come to the Concert of my Or-

chestra, and thou shalt see Four Thousand people All Swayed by One Common Impulse. There shalt thou behold True Harmony of Soul induced by Harmony of Sound.

So I went and listened. And it was Enjoyable.

And I stood in the door as men went out, and Women also, yea, seven women to one man, and I asked one and another, What was thy thought while the Orchestra played?

And the first woman answered me, and said, My Thought was of Heaven, where only, as I believe, may one hear Sweeter Music.

And a Maiden answered me, and said, My thought was, O, for a good Partner and a Slippery Floor!

And a man said, I thought it was a Beastly Bore.

And a woman said, I thought the Soloist had Perfectly Lovely Hair, and I wondered how he made it Stand Out So.

And a man said, I thought if each of those Hundred Musicians would Swap his Horn or Fiddle for a Gun, and go Down with Pershing, they could make Quite as much Noise, and maybe get Now and Then a Mexican.

And when I heard these Comments, I did not feel so Badly about the Discordant Impressions of my Preaching.

THE BRAKEMAN AND THE FARMER

NOW I went on a Vacation ; and as I neared the Town whither I went, I stood upon the Platform of the Train with my Grip in my hand. And the Brakeman he also stood beside me as the train slowed down. And we passed a great Farm, as the Train entered the Town, and the Farmer sat on his Front Porch and watched the train go by. And the Brakeman spake concerning the Farmer, and he said, Behold that Lucky Guy hath little to do but to come in for his dinner about Half Past Eleven, and sit and watch this Train. He hath an hundred and three-score Acres, and Fat Cattle and many Swine, the price whereof riseth continually ; and at night he jumpeth into his Ford and goeth whithersoever he listeth ; and I ride on this Blessed Old Train from Smith's Junction to Metropolis one day, and from Metropolis to Smith's Junction the next ; and it getteth on my Nerve. I would I were a Farmer, yea, that Lucky Guy yonder, whom I observe every day at eleven-thirty sitting on his Front Porch and watching us go by.

Then the Train came to a stop, and I alighted ; and there came to meet me a lad in a Ford to take me to the

Farm House where I was to lodge; and behold, it was the house of the Farmer whom I had seen sitting upon his Front Porch. And I tarried with him seven days.

And upon his front gate was a sign whereon was written:

THIS PLACE FOR SAIL.

And I spake with the Farmer concerning it. And I said, Are not thine Acres ample, and are not Prices Good? Wherefore wouldest thou sell thy Farm, and go thou knowest not where?

And he answered, I know Mighty Well where I would go. I would move to Smith's Junction and be a Brake-man on the Railroad.

But I spake to him, saying, Smith's Junction is a Smoky Place, and likewise is it Noisy. It hath little but Passing Trains, and the Grass therein Groweth not, nor are the Trees thereof Green by reason of the Smoke.

But, he said, I have had enough of the Grass, and I am not as Nebuchadnezzar who fed thereon; I would be even as that Insolent Brakeman who goeth by here every other day at eleven-thirty and back again on the next at fourteen. He hath indeed a Soft Snap. When it raineth, he is not wet, and when it is Cold he suffereth not. He is not troubled by Weeds, and when he heareth of Hog Cholera he laugheth. And every month he Draweth Down Sixty-Five Perfectly Good Dollars wherewith he goeth to the Movies on the nights he spendeth at the end of his run away from his Home.

And I meditated much of these things; and I said in my heart that it was not well for every man thus to envy his neighbor; and I thought it better that the Brakeman should stick to his Brake and the Farmer to his Farm; for God hath appointed to every man his work and to every man his burden, and to every man his joys. And the world hath few Soft Snaps to those who know the Business from the Inside.

THE POTATOES

NOW there came to the back door of the House wherein I dwell an Husbandman, and he said, I would fain sell to thee a Bushel of Potatoes.

And I said unto him, Though I had the wealth of Dives might I purchase an Whole Bushel of Potatoes at one time at the Present Market Prices?

And he answered and said, Though a man were poor as Lazarus yet might he purchase a Bushel of Potatoes at the Price whereat I sell, for it is Much Below the Market.

And he showed me the Potatoes, and behold they were very Large, and goodly to behold.

And I called unto me Keturah, and she counted the Money in the Bag, and behold we had enough, and that was Just About All.

And we bought a Bushel of Potatoes.

Then were we Proud in our hearts, and highly exalted in spirit; neither had our neighbors Anything On Us though they ride in Automobiles .

But when we removed the Top Row of Potatoes from the Basket, behold they that were below were so small we wist not whether they were Potatoes or Hickory Nuts;

but when we ate them then we knew that they were not Hickory Nuts; but whether they were Potatoes we knew not; for they were Too Small to leave any Taste in the Mouth.

Then spake Keturah unto me, and she said, My lord.

And I answered, Say on.

And she said, Though we have lived long we learn slowly.

And I answered, Thou speakest wisely At Times, and this is one of the Times.

And she said, Hereafter will I learn that when the price is Small the Potatoes are like to be Smaller.

And I spake unto her and said, Keturah, thou hast uttered a Profound Truth; for men may not obtain any Good Thing in this life that Costeth them Nothing, save only Sunshine and the Grace of God; and as for all the rest, as is the Cost in Labor, so is the Price thereof.

THE PARK BY THE RAILWAY

NOW I rode upon the railway, even upon a swift Express Train. And I rose up very early in the Morning, and behold, we were passing through a Little Town. And beside the Railway through the Town there ran a Street, and on one side of the street were there Houses. And the Houses were blackened by the Smoke of the train. And the land on the further side of the Street next the Railway was grown up to weeds.

But in the midst of the Street I beheld a place where three or four houses which stood side by side had in front of them One Wide Lawn, that stretched from before the thresholds of the houses up to the very Car Wheels. And the same was green with grass and was smooth and well mown; yea, and upon the borders of this Lawn were there beds of Flowers in bloom.

And the Spirit of the Lord said unto me, Beholdest thou what these people have done? For their homes must needs be here beside the Railway, where it is Smoky and unpleasant; yet have these wise and good people highly resolved not to sink to the level of their surroundings, but to make the same beautiful in so far as that may be done.

And I considered how along beside every man's life doth run uncomfortable situations of contiguity, and beside many some Whanging, Hooting Horror, so that no man liveth wholly as he would desire to live. And I prayed that God would put it into the hearts of men everywhere to grade and level and seed the same, and therein plant some flowers.

THE CHANNEL LUNCHEON

NOW it came to pass in the days before the Great War, while yet a man might make a Pilgrimage and not encounter a Bomb dropped on him from the Heavens above, or a Submarine in the Waters beneath, that I journeyed from a land named France and a Gay City called Paris, to a Land called Britannia, which at that time Ruled the Waves, and to a city called London. And part of the way I journeyed by Land till I came to a town called Calais, where I found a Ship awaiting me, and I sailed to a town called Dover. And there was with me a man whom I had met on my Journey, and we entered the Ship together.

Now it was about Midday, and I hungered, and I said to my friend, Come, let us enter into the Cabin, where a Table is spread, and let us Eat.

And my friend said to me, Not on thy life. Knowest thou not that this is the English Channel, and that the same hath a Surly Temper, and it Lieth in Wait for the man who hath had a Luncheon, and Taketh it Away from him?

But I said unto him, Say not so. It may be the Channel will be Good to-day; and if not, we can but Lose what we have Gained .

And he said, Have the French left thee any Money? Throw it not into the Channel; for Luncheon on these Ships costeth Two-and-Six, which is the same as Three Francs, and thou wilt need the same when thou comest to London.

And I considered what he said, for the French had left me little Money, and the British Isles were waiting for That Little. For the English scorn us Americans because we love the Dollar; therefore do they gladly take our Dollars away from us, that they may change them to Shillings. And they think it a sin to love a Dollar, but a Great Virtue to love a Shilling. So I considered what my friend had said. Nevertheless I spake to him.

Nay, my friend. I still have a few pieces of Gold, and I think I can spare enough Silver to pay Two-and-Six for a Luncheon, and another sixpence for the Garçon who shall serve me. And I will eat.

He said, A Fool and his Luncheon are soon Parted.

But I said, Even if I shall be Separated from my Luncheon after I have received it, yet will I bear it as best I may. Yea, and I think I shall be better so. For it is a strain upon the Muscles of a man to Strike at Nothing; and it is Vexation of spirit to argue with a man who hath no Reason; so also is it a Painful Thing to be Required to Contribute to the Atlantic when one hath Nought to Contribute. If I must pay tribute to Neptune, he shall find me Generous.

So I sought the Cabin, and I ate a Good Meal, and I paid Three Francs for the same, and the Half of a Franc gave I to the Garcon. And when I came on Deck the Channel had on its Best Bib and Tucker, and that is Going Some.

And I found my friend stretched out on a Bench, and he Railed at me, and Mocked me, and said, Thou shalt pay well for thy Folly. Behold, if I am Sick, having eaten nothing, what shall it be to a Glutton like thee?

And I was minded to say unto him to hold his peace, but at that moment the Ship gave a Lurch, and he held his peace without my telling him to do so. Yea, and that was all he held.

And now, on that voyage, which seemed unto him to be longer than it really was, he made many journeys to the side of the Ship, and back to the Bench. And each time he went he Hated me the more. And he looked his Hatred, and he spake not.

For there is no hatred like that of a man who is Seasick, and who seeth another man Well; yea, especially if he himself hath Boasted or Given advice.

Now it came to pass that day that I suffered not at all. Yea, as God had given me Appetite and a Good Square Meal, so also did He give unto me Good Digestion. But my friend had none of these things. Yea, on that day was fulfilled the word that unto him that hath shall be given, and so it was given to me. But from him that had not was taken away even that which he had.

And I considered these things, and I said to my soul that I would Take such Blessings as God should send to me, and Use them as they Came.

THE TRIANGLE IN FICTION

NOW, I have a friend who spake to me, saying,
Thou readest too much Philosophy and Theology
and Science. It is not Good for thee. Read no more
Heavy Literature for a season, but take a little Fiction
for thy Stomach's sake.

And I asked him, What shall I learn in Fiction?

And he said, If thou shalt read the Latest thou shalt
learn about the Mystery of the Triangle.

And I said, I know about the Triangle in Geometry,
but not in Fiction. And he spake to me a proverb, saying
Two are Company, and Three are a Crowd.

So I went to a Book Shop, and I bought one of the
Latest. And the title thereof was We Three, and the
name of the Writer was Gouverneur Morris.

Now, the Triangle in this book had these three Angles.
The Hero was a Bachelor, the Spoiled Only Son of Two
Wealthy and Misguided Parents. And the Heroine was
a Comely Young Married Woman, the Spoiled Only Wife
of a Misguided, Hard Working Business Man. And the
third Angle was the Husband of the Heroine, who Toiled
hard to get for her Money to spend for things which she

did not need, and who did not give her the Spanking which she did need. And all men knew the Hero, that he could not earn his Salt, but lived on the wealth of his Father; and they Despised him. And all Women knew the hero, that he was not a man whom a woman could safely trust, and they all thought him Too Cute for Anything.

And the Hero and the Heroine came to the Husband and said to him, We love each other, and thee we love not. Now, therefore, give us a Writing of Divorcement and let us Marry and be Happy.

And they knew that this was against the Laws of God and Man, yet cared they nothing save for what they called Love.

So they said to him, Give us the freedom that belongeth to our Love, and go thou to the devil Any Old Way that pleaseth thee.

And the Husband was Sore Grieved. For he Loved his Wife with a Great and Unselfish Love which she deserved not.

And the Husband said, In one year I will do even as ye have asked of me if ye still ask it. Only speak not and write not to each other for Twelve Months.

And they promised.

And within the Twelve Months she had time for another Flirtation, with a Yale Student, and then her heart went no more after her lover, but what little was left of it (and there was Mighty Little of it to Start With) returned to her husband.

And within the same Twelve months the Hero had two Love Affairs, one of them Disgraceful, and he forgot the Heroine, and cared no more for her.

And in the last chapter he met a Housemaid, who was going to France to be a Red Cross Nurse, and he married her, and he said, I will even do something with my worthless life; I will go also and work for the Red Cross.

And at the end of the book he Sailed on the Lusitania.

And there the book closed.

And when I had read the book I was not so sorry as I had been that the Lusitania went down.

THE HARE PIE

NOW, there was a Proverb which men spake often one to another, and sometimes I myself have used it on this wise: Wouldst thou make an Hare Pie? The way is this: First, catch the Hare.

And the meaning of the Proverb was this, that with the Right Material and a Good Start, all the Rest was Easy. And I meditated much of this Proverb, and I Considered whether it were True; for many times I had seen Good Material Wasted, and Right Starts that afterward went Wrong.

Now, I had never eaten Hare Pie.

And it came to pass that a friend of mine went Hunting, and he Shot, and he Slew an Hare. And he sent the Hare to me. And I gave it to the Cook, even to a Daughter of the Sons of Erin, and I said, Make me an Hare Pie, for at last I have caught an Hare.

And the Thing she made gave me an Ache of the Stomach, and Ptomaine Poisoning, and many things beside.

And not long thereafter the Cook Gave Notice that she would Not Work Longer in a Place where she Could Only

be Out Seven Nights and Two afternoons a Week. And she Quit.

Now on the Evening after she had gone, Keturah, my wife, entered the Kitchen, and sought in the Ice Chest, that she might discover what we had for Supper.

And on the Top Shelf she found a Little Chipped Beef. And on the Middle Shelf she found Some Rice. And on the Bottom Shelf she found Divers small dishes with a Little Something in Each. And Keturah took them, and she stirred them together in a Bowl, and she put in certain Spices, and Raisins, and Figs, and divers other things, whereof she found One or Two Left Over, and she put it into the Oven and baked it.

And when we sat down to the Table, we Gave Thanks to God that He still had left us food, and that we had many things to be thankful for, even though we had no daughter of Erin to cook for us.

And I removed the Cover from the Dish, and I ate of what I found therein, and a part thereof I gave to Keturah.

And behold, it was Delicious.

And I spake to her and said, What is this Savory Dish?

And she said, It hath no name, but thou mayst call it Hare Pie.

But there were no Hares therein, though there was Very Nearly Everything Else.

And she spake thus to me, O Safed, my dear and very foolish lord, I have heard thee say that the way to make an Hare Pie is first to catch thy Hare; thou speakest after

the manner of men, and thou speakest foolishly. The way to make an Hare Pie is, First, Catch thy Cook.

And I caught Keturah.

So I thanked God again that the Cook had gone, and that I still had Keturah. For there be few Cooks who can make so good Hare Pie with Hares as she can make without.

And I reflected that some Proverbs are wise and some are stupid, and some of them are Lies.

THE APPENDIX AND THE WART

NOW among my Friends is a Famous Chirurgeon, and thus he spake to me:

If thou canst behold the Flowing of Blood and not Faint, come with me, and I will show thee how I Operate.

And I went with him to the Hospital, and he clad himself in white raiment; likewise did I clothe myself in white. And he cleansed himself with Many Washings, and I did likewise. For the Modern Chirurgeon Counteth a great compliment to Godliness when he admitted that it is almost as good as Cleanliness; albeit he knoweth well how good Godliness is; yea, few men in Town know better than he how much it would diminish his work if all men were Godly.

And they brought unto him a man Grievously Sick with an Appendix.

And the Chirurgeon Cut It Out.

And I stood for an whole Hour and beheld the while he did it.

And in my heart I was thinking of the Sick Man, and I prayed God on his behalf, that he might recover, and also that he might be a good man.

And as the man lay naked, I beheld, and on the side of his belly was a great and ugly Wart.

And the Chirurgeon finished his work, and sewed up the wound that he had made, and sat back while his Assistants did swathe the man in Bandages.

And he had not seen the Wart, though all the while it was before him.

And I said, Doctor, Behold the Wart.

And he answered and said, What Wart?

And I showed him. And I said, It is a Large one, and it must often Chafe. Yea, often must he hurt it when he Putteth on and off his Clothes.

And the Chirurgeon heard me speak, and he knew that it was so, yet said he nothing.

And I said, Doctor, Now, while he is unconscious, and can feel no Pain, Cut It Out, as thou dist cut out the Appendix.

And he said, Warts are rather Small Potatoes for me. My business is to cut out Appendixes rather than Warts.

Yet because I urged him, he did as I desired. In his left hand he took his Forceps, and therewith he lifted the Wart as far as it would Stretch; and with his right hand took he up his Scissors, and with them he made a deep and clean cut. And he cast the Wart away. Then with a Needle took he one Stitch, and he clapped a Small Plaster over the place.

And all this did he in the half of a minute. Neither did it cost him much labor or skill.

And I said to him, This man will thank thee for this.

And he laughed and said, He will not discover that it is gone for the space of Six Months; then will he Boast that it went away after he had Rubbed it with a Pork Rind Stolen in the Dark of the Moon.

And I answered, That may be, but what is that to thee? The wart is gone. Yea, what if he testify that he was cured as to his Appendix by Christian Science, that is a matter for his own conscience, if so be he have one. Nevertheless, thou hast done thy duty.

And he said If thou art pleased, I am. Nevertheless, I remove Appendixes, not Warts.

And I said, Count it then that I did remove the Wart, and thou the Appendix.

And he said, Let it be so. Thou mayest have the Wart.

Now I thought within my heart how many men there are who have cut out of their Moral Life the Aching Appendix of their Grosser Sins, who yet cling to the Warts of Harmful and Disagreeable Habits, and also to Minor Sins, and who are most Reluctant to Cut Them Out. And I prayed to God for them, and for myself. For I, also, am a man in whose life is no Appendix of Gross Sin. I Steal not, nor Murder, nor Commit Adultery. And I prayed God that I might Cut Out the Warts also.

THE TREES AND THE TABLETS

NOW, I was in the city of Boston and I found a church with a great Dome as high as Bunker Hill Monument, and with it a great Publishing House, and I entered, and another man was with me, and they offered us a Book wherein it was said that to Mind there is no Pain, or Death or Sin. And the price thereof was Two Dollars and Eighteen Cents.

And I spake to the man who sold the Books, saying, How is this? For we are told to buy the Truth and sell it not.

And he said, We go that one better; for we buy the Truth in this book for Thirty Cents and sell it for Two Dollars and Eighteen Cents.

And the man who was with me bought a Book, but I bought it not.

And before the church is there a park, which Appertaineth unto the church and belongeth unto it. And in the Park are trees. And the man who had bought the Book sat down under a tree and read the Book, which told him how he might never know Pain or Death. And

the Tree was not flourishing, for it had an Error of Mortal Mind. So also had the other trees in the Park.

And on every Tree was a Tablet. And I spake unto the man with the Book, and I said, "Cease to read the Book and read what is printed upon the Tablet upon the Tree."

And he closed the book, and he turned about. And he read what was written on the Tablet. And this was the superscription thereon:

WARNING.
COME NOT NIGH THIS TREE
LEST YE DIE.
AND LET NO BEAST EAT OF THE GRASS
THAT GROWETH UNDERNEATH
LEST HE PERISH WITH THEE.
FOR THIS TREE HATH BEEN POISONED WITH
DEADLY POISON,
EVEN WITH ARSENATE OF LEAD,
TO SAVE IT FROM THE GIPSY MOTH.
YEA, AND FROM THE BROWN TAIL MOTH.
WHEREFORE, BEWARE AND COME NOT NIGH
THIS TREE.

And the man was afraid, and he said, How terrible is this place.

And I said unto him, Nay, be not afraid. What is Arsenate of Lead but an Error of Mortal Mind? Doth not the book in thy hand teach thee that Poison hath no effect if one Thinketh in his Heart that there is no Poison?

But he moved away from the tree.

And I spake yet farther unto him and I said, Should Errors like Gypsy Moth and Brown Tail Moth be fought with Carnal Weapons when Truth is so much Cheaper and More Effective?

And he answered, Truth is not so cheap as I thought it was. It costs Two Dollars and Eighteen Cents, and the worst of it is, I am not sure that it is Truth.

And I answered, If thou hast learned this and it hath cost thee only Two Dollars and Eighteen Cents be glad that thou hast secured it so cheaply. It costeth some men more.

And he said, What do they do with my Two Dollars and Eighteen Cents? Thirty Cents thereof they spend in buying another Book that they may sell to some other man as Ignorant as I was, and the residue, or a part thereof, they spend for Arsenate of Lead.

And I said, What is that to thee?

And he said, I feel like the Original Cost of this Book. Book.

THE MARRIED FLIRTS

NOW I was reading in the Daily Paper, and Keturah entered my Room. And she spake unto me saying, My lord.

And I answered, Trouble me not, for I am reading the News.

And she said, Understandest thou what thou readest?

And I said, Verily, I do not. For I was reading that a Married Man had been Flirting with the Wife of another man.

And she answered, What is the mystery about that?

And I said, I understand neither the Why nor the How.

And she said, I will show thee. It cometh to pass on this wise. There sitteth a man reading his paper, and there walketh past him in the Park or on the Trolley, a Comely Lady, and she droppeth her Kerchief, quite by Accident, even like this.

And she walked past my chair, and her skirts brushed my knees so that I looked up. And behold, as she passed, there fluttered to the ground a Kerchief. And I picked it up, and passed it to her. And I said, Madame, permit me.

And she said, That was very well done, Safed, my lord. And now thou must look about in the Car, and see that there is no other seat save beside thee, and so must thou Shove Along.

And I did even so; and the Chair wherein I sat was wide, so that there was room for us both; neither sat we Quite so Close as in the Trolley.

And she said, Now must thou lend me thy Paper, and I must pretend to read it.

And I did even as she said.

Then she sat beside me, and read the paper, yea, and I read also. Nevertheless, in twenty minutes we had managed to talk of Browning, and Art, and the Weather, and our Souls, and the Sad Condition of Married Life, and had told each other Where we Lived, and had discovered a Concert which we were both to Attend. And I played the Game as Keturah Taught me.

And she said, How dost thou like it, Safed?

And I answered, It is Lots of Fun. Let us do thus often.

And she said, Safed, would it be half so much fun to Flirt with any Other Woman?

And I said, Oh, thou fairest and finest of all the Daughters of Eve, if ever I desire to Flirt, may God send thee to me to Flirt with; for with thee only would I thus behave and not feel like a Condemned Fool. Whereas, when I flirt with thee, I feel like a Very Wise man.

And Keturah said, Safed, my lord, I have something to say.

And I said, Keturah, say on.

And she said, Oh, Safed, my lord. Thou hast given good advice to many people. But nothing thou hast ever said to the sons and daughters of men is more important than this. Speak to the men and women who are married, who feel the Tug and Grind and Monotony of Daily Life, and who have Grown Commonplace to Each other. And say to them, Put on your Beautiful Garments now and then, and Flirt a Little with Each other. Yea, let not the Romance die out of your married life, lest ye weary of each other, and Satan set a snare for your feet. Say unto them that if they go at it aright, it is quite as much fun to flirt with each other as with other people, and much Safer.

And I said, Keturah, thou hast spoken words of wisdom; and it would be for the salvation of thousands of Fool Women and men who are Bigger Fools or Worse, if they heeded thy words.

And I said unto Keturah that I would take the message which she whispered in my ear, and I would Proclaim it from the Housetops.

Yea, and thus shall some of the Divorce Courts be compelled to Take a Vacation.

THE MAN WHO SUSPECTED HIS NEIGHBOR

NOW on a day there came to me a man who said, May I look in the Philosopher's Stone?

And I led him within the house, and seated him where the Light of a Window might fall upon his Countenance, and I said, Sit down and tell me, Why dost thou wish to look in the Philosopher's Stone?

And he said, My neighbor is reputed to be a good man, but I suspect he is a Bad man; people trust him with Money, and I suspect he misuseth it. And his neighbor next beyond hath a lovely Wife, who is even as a Peach, and I suspect that he visiteth her when her husband is away. And because I have caught him in none of these things, therefore would I look in the Philosopher's Stone, and see if they be true.

And I took the Philosopher's Stone from the Table and I gave it to him, and I said, Be sure thou keep it This Side Up; beware thou look not into the Other Side.

And he looked long in the side of the Stone which I gave him Uppermost, and I looked into his face. And what he saw I knew was Nothing; but what I saw was What he Hoped to see.

And after a time he handed me back the Stone, and I held it in my hand the Same Side Up, that he might see How I Held It; but into the Stone I looked not.

And I asked him, What didst thou see?

And he said, I think I see that it is all just as I have Suspected.

And I said, If thou hast seen what thou Camest to see, go thy Way.

But he lingered. And he said to me, Although I think I have read the Philosopher's Stone aright, yet because I am in Another Line of Business and have little Familiarity with Philosopher's Stones, look thou and tell me; and if thou seest what I think I see, I will give thee a Talent of Silver.

And I lifted the stone that was in mine Hand, and I turned it over. And I looked in the Other Side of the Stone and into his face, and he asked, Why dost thou not look in the same side of the Stone wherein I looked?

And I said, That side was for thee, and this for me.

And I looked the second time, first into the Stone and then into his face. And he asked, What canst thou see in that side more than in the other?

And I said, In this side I can see thy heart.

And I looked the third time into the Stone and into his Face, and he was Uneasy.

And I looked the Fourth time, and his countenance was Red.

And I looked the Fifth time, and he asked of me, What was the side of the Stone into which I looked?

And I answered, That side is a Moral Mirror, which reflecteth back whatever is in a man's own heart.

And I looked the Sixth time, and his face was white like ashes.

And I looked the Seventh time, long at the Stone, and longer in his face, and his Countenance fell, and he Trembled.

And I was silent till he rose to go, and he went away and spake not a word. And the Silver he forgot to leave with me.

For this have I often seen, that the Root of Suspicion is this, that a man suspecteth his Neighbor of doing what he himself would do in the like place.

And the man thought that I had seen this in the Philosopher's Stone; but I had been looking in his heart.

THE THIRD STICK

NOW it came to pass in one of my journeys that I came into the midst of the Mountains in a region called Kentucky. And my Host was a mountaineer, Long and Lean and Lank. And I thought him Unlearned, but what time I was about to say to my soul, Behold I am a learned man, and this man of the Mountains is Ignorant, he opened his mouth, and he uttered some Quaint and Homely word which I Discovered to be a Word of Wisdom. And at one time he thus spake.

You can't build a fire out of two sticks.

Now I had little experience of fires, and knew little of the number of sticks requisite unto the making thereof, but I perceived that he spake not of Fires but of Folks.

Now about this time I beheld a Man and a Maid, and they loved each other Very Much, so that all their Friends Smiled. And it came to pass that they came to me to be married, and I married them. And He said of Her, She is all the world to me. And She said of Him, He is all the world to me. And they believed it, and Tried to Make it So.

And it Did Not Work.

For God hath not so made Human Life.

And in time they Wearied of Each other, and of Having a Monopoly of Each other, and Being Compelled to be All the World to each other All the Time.

Now it came to pass that just before they would have Separated, God sent them a little Child for their Own. And they said, We must love each other for the Sake of the Child.

So was a Third Stick added to their Fire.

Yea, about this time they began to Love God, and to seek out those among their Fellow men who had less than they; and in loving God and Man they learned anew to love Each other.

After this I beheld a Fool and his Money; and of these Two sticks was there made no Fire, for the Fool had Money to Burn, and he and his Money were Soon Parted.

And I thought often of the Mountaineer and his wise word.

But as I pondered these things, I communed with God, and I said, And yet, O my God, may there not be a Warm fire of God and the Soul, with no Third Stick?

And I opened my Bible, and there read, that this could not be; for the commandment was of love to God and Man, and that the man who saith, I love God and Him alone, and loveth not his neighbor, is a Liar. So the Soul and its God have need of a Third Stick.

Then said I, O my God, and is it so with Thy Soul also? And as I meditated, I said to my soul, Yea, I believe it is so with the Soul of God. For there is God underived, the

Creator of all, the Father everlasting; and then there is God incarnate, seeking to making Himself Objective and thus becoming Flesh; and these Two, even the Father and the Son, make not a Divine Completeness; for God is also the Holy Ghost, answering back both to God and man in the sweet Influences of the Grace of God, and also in the intercessions of the prayers and lives of humanity.

And when I thought of all these things, I thought much of the words of the Kentucky Mountaineer, for he was an Unlettered Man, but God had taught him Wisdom.

THE UNRECKONED GIFT

NOW I had a friend, and his wife was a friend of Keturah; and he was a man who always had Misfortunes. And he came to me and said, Loan me an Hundred Dollars, and I will give thee my Note; yea, and I will pay thee Usury at the rate of Six Percent.

And I loaned him the Money, though I had need of it; and he paid me neither the Hundred Dollars nor the Usury. Yea, it was not according to his Principle to pay the Interest, neither was it to his Interest to pay the Principal. But whenever he met me, he made many Promises and many Apologies; and when his wife met Keturah, she was Embarrassed.

Now Christmas was approaching, and Keturah said, Let us Cancel that Note, and send it to them for Christmas. And I was Glad to Get Rid of it.

So I brought the note, and I sat me down, and I took my Pen and Mine Ink Horn, and I made figures.

And Keturah said, What doest thou, Safed, my lord?

And I said, I am computing the Interest; for it hath been Seven Years since this Note was given, and the Hundred Dollars hath become Two Hundred, or thereabout;

and I would fain discern how much of a Gift we are making.

And Keturah said, Safed, I am ashamed of thee. Canst thou not do a Generous Deed without trying to Magnify it in thine own Imagination? Art thou not willing to give without Reckoning? Then thou knowest not the Real Joy of Giving. Yea, and thou reckonest wrongly. For what if thou shalt be able by computing and compounding Usury to make an Hundred Dollars into Two Hundred; still is thy gift not increased thereby. What thou art giving is not the money thou once didst loan, for that is gone, and the Note is not worth money; thou art giving Peace of Mind to thine unfortunate friend, and wiping the Blush of Confusion from the cheek of my friend. What that costeth us now is but a Scrap of Paper, but the value thereof cannot be reckoned in silver.

Now when I heard these things, I was pricked in mine heart. And I said, O my beloved, daughter of all the wisest of the angels, thy soul is a soul of pure gold, and thy speech is the voice of wisdom. Behold, men have called thy Husband a Generous Man, but thou are far more generous than I. For he who giveth and reckoneth hath still a Smirch of Stinginess in his Generosity; but thou givest and reckonest not; yea, and thus hast thou always given.

And I remember these things, and I thought of the Good God, who giveth, and not according to measure. And I prayed, and I said, O, my God, forgive the Parsimony of our Generosity.

THE CHRISTMAS STOCKING

LIFE is a long stocking. Some people say it is a black one; in truth it is striped. We cannot see to the bottom of it, nor reach our presents at a single snatch; we must take them out one by one.

Thank God for the length of the stocking and for the variety of its contents! Thank Him for the gifts that bulge out at the top—the big red apple and the candy bag—the commonplace mercies we have learned to expect. Thank Him for the providence that holds pleasures underneath for the sweetness of surprise. And thank Him yet again that we do not find all the presents we have marked on the Christmas list of our desires, but have something left for which to hang up our stockings next year. And when we have pulled out all the gifts we thought were there, thank God most of all for the blessings hidden away in the toe, the choicest and best of all the secrets of His love, discovered after the commoner pleasures have ceased to satisfy.

How many blessings we almost overlook in our disappointment that we did not get the red balloon, or because having gotten it we cannot mount upon it and fly away to

the moon. Thank God for the blessings we care least to receive, but which stay with us after the balloon has shrunk, and collapsed, and ignominiously tumbled.

Life is a Christmas stocking, and it is long and deep. Take your blessings from the top, gratefully but not too eagerly or fast; and when you have reached the very bottom, hang up the stocking of your hope again; for God has other Christmas gifts for you in the world from which Christmas comes.

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Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: Sept. 2009

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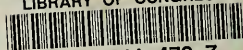


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